

# **GOD'S CHURCH MANUAL**



**“That thou mayest know how  
thou oughtest to thyself in the  
house of God.”**

**(First Timothy 3:15)**

**B. KIRKLAND**



# Introduction

***“For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?”***

(First Peter 4:17)

## WHY THIS BOOK?

I put it off writing this book for about ten years. To put it off any longer would be to go against what I believe the Holy Spirit is leading me to do. **If I am right**, if the Holy Spirit led me to write the following, you should read it carefully and prayerfully. **If I am wrong**, show me from the Word of God, and I will write a public apology concerning this material.

## PLAIN AND SIMPLE

The content of this material is written plain and simple. You will not have to guess what is being said. We deal with the issues facing fundamental independent Baptists. Fundamentalism as we once knew it and fundamentalism as it is today has very little in common.

## FUNDAMENTAL LEADERS HAVE CHANGED

It does not take much spiritual discernment to see that men such as Jack VanImpe, and Billy Graham, have changed from the positions they once held. To their credit, however, they are not pretending to be something they are not. They are traveling through the swamp of the present day apostasy, and we all know where they stand. They once stood with fundamentalists. They now align themselves with the Pope and publicly make it known. At least they are honest apostates. Today, we need to be honest fundamentalists.

## TIME TO LOOK IN THE MIRROR

The truth is, most fundamentalists have no problem expressing the truth about Graham, VanImpe, and other turncoats; however, the time has come to take a look at our own problems. There was a time when being a fundamentalist meant more than having a sign at front of the church with the word “*fundamental*” on it. There was a time when it meant preaching the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth; however, **things have changed!**



## WHAT IS ACCEPTABLE UNTO TO THE LORD?

In **Ephesians 5:10** we are commanded to be, “*Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord.*”

**Fundamental pastors have made it acceptable** for people to join God’s local church with no evidence of a genuine, Scriptural salvation. Is that acceptable with the Lord? *If it is not, why have we made it acceptable?*

**Fundamental pastors have made it acceptable** for people to join God’s local church with little or no commitment to the cause of Christ. Is that acceptable with the Lord? *If it is not, why have we made it acceptable?*

**Fundamental pastors have made it acceptable** for a large percentage of their church members to sit in church on Sunday morning singing, “*Oh How I Love Jesus*,” and then sit at home on Sunday evening service, watching television. Is that acceptable with the Lord? *If it is not, why have we made it acceptable?*

**Fundamental pastors have made it acceptable** for church members to call themselves fundamentalists while missing two out of three meetings a week. That means these “fundamentalists” miss 104 meetings out of 156 each year. Is that acceptable with the Lord? *If it is not, why have we made it acceptable?*

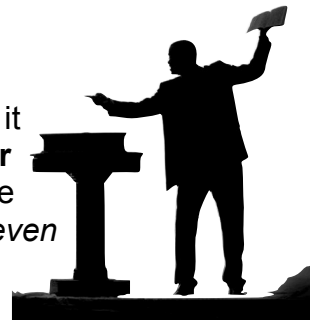
Would any pastor putting together a church baseball team allow anyone to join the team if he refused to show up for two-out-of-three games? By doing this we are teaching the young people in our churches that the local church is not as important as a ball game. **We call this fundamentalism?**

### **FELLOWSHIP WITH PREACHERS WHO PREACH “DAMNABLE HERESY”**

Many, if not most preachers, who call themselves fundamentalists have refused the direct command of God to separate and expose those who promote heresies. **Second Peter 2:1** warns us, “...*there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction.*”

### **CHRISTIAN HERETICS**

The only time the New Testament speaks of heretics is when it refers to Christians preaching false doctrine. In **Second Peter 2:1**, God warns us that Christians would be teaching what He calls “*damnable heresies*.” Christian teachers would be, “...*even denying the Lord that bought* (translated “redeemed” 3x) *them.*” Christian teachers would bring “*swift destruction*” to the cause of Christ.



### **HERESIES & DAMNABLE HERESIES**

It is important to understand that there is a difference between “*heresies*” and “*damnable heresies*.”

### **CALVINISM IS HERESY**

Anyone who promotes the blasphemy that says God predestined some people for Hell is preaching heresy!

### **SALVATION WITHOUT REPENTANCE IS A “DAMNABLE HERESY.”**

In recent years, God’s plan of salvation has been replaced with a slick soul-winning sales pitch. The Gospel is presented like an insurance policy against Hell. Lost souls are told to pray a little prayer and they will go to Heaven when they die. This is not just heresy, this is a “*damnable heresy*.” This heresy will damn a soul to Hell for eternity.

### **REPENT OR PERISH**

Jesus said in **Luke 13:3** “...*except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.*” He did not say simply pray for forgiveness. He said we would perish, “*except ye repent.*”

Catholics are praying forgiveness prayers everyday. God is no respecter of persons. It matters not if we call ourselves Baptists or Catholics, **Jesus said, "...except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish."**

## **FUNDAMENTALISTS CHANGED THE PLAN OF SALVATION**

It was not carnal evangelicals who first promoted the "damnable heresy" that repentance is not necessary for salvation, it was two men who called themselves fundamentalists. The first one to promote it was Jack Hyles, and the next was the Sword of the Lord editor, Curtis Hudson. It was fundamental Christian leaders who promoted this heresy, suggesting that Jesus did not know what He was talking about concerning repentance. It was fundamentalists that said just pray a prayer and ask Jesus to forgive your sin and you will go to Heaven when you die.

## **FRIENDSHIPS ARE MORE IMPORTANT THAN DEFENDING TRUTH**

If evangelical leaders had changed the plan of salvation, fundamentalists would have had no problem exposing their heresy. Why is it acceptable to expose the errors of Jack VanImpe and not acceptable to expose the heresies of Jack Hyles?

## **FILLING THE PEWS AS WE HELP TO FILL HELL**

Dr. W. A. Criswell was the pastor of the First Baptist Church in Dallas Texas. The membership there grew to about 28,000 members. He said, ***"I will be surprised to see twenty-five percent of my church members in Heaven."*** If he was right, 21,000 people who prayed a prayer and joined that local church in Dallas went to Hell when they died. *Is this acceptable with God?*



Since Criswell believed seventy-five percent of the people were not saved, why did he make it acceptable for them to be members? Did twenty-one thousand people who were heading for Hell believe they were on the road to Heaven because the pastor made it acceptable for them to join a Baptist church when he doubted they were saved?

## **DR. A. W. TOZER PUT THE NUMBER AT NINETY PERCENT**

Tozer, one of the most highly respected Bible teachers who ever lived, suggested ninety percent of professing Christians are not saved. Commenting on this problem, Lewis Sperry Chafer said, *"Too often methods have been employed requiring mere outward actions which, though sincere, may indicate no heart experience."* He said, *"Pressure can be the chief dependence of the preacher for his apparent success in his work."* Chafer continued, *"It is often recognized that the evangelist to be a success must possess a dominating and even overpowering personality. This with other psychological influences which are skillfully employed amount to what is almost an irresistible effect."*



## **PAUL RELIED ON THE HOLY SPIRIT**

We read in **First Corinthians 2:4-5**, that Paul said, *"And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing (persuasive) words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God."*

## TRUE CONVICTION OR MIND MANIPULATING DECISIONS?

Many modern day fundamental pastors are using cheap mind-manipulating tricks taught by Jack Hyles at Hammond, Indiana to trick people into walking to the front of the church after a sermon.

Years ago I sat in one of his “how to do it” classes in Hammond. We were told to have some Christians ready to “prime the well” when the invitation was given. They were to walk the aisle so it would be easier for the unsaved to follow them. We were told to word the invitation in such a way that every Christian would look bad if they didn’t walk the aisle.

## THERE ARE NO MIND-MANIPULATING TRICKS IN THE BIBLE

In Acts chapter two Peter preached, the Holy Spirit worked, and the people cried out in conviction saying, “...*what shall we do?*”

Peter did not use some cheap trick to get them to pray an empty meaningless forgiveness prayer. He did not get some disciples to “prime the well” at the end of his message to make it easier for people to get saved. **People responded to the Holy Spirit when He gripped their soul with conviction through the preaching of the Word of God!** As a result people were genuinely saved and unlike today’s mind-manipulated decisions we read, “...*they continued.*”

All we need to do is “...*preach the Word,*” get out of the way, and let The Holy Spirit convict through the preaching of the Word. If the Holy Spirit does not work, we must not trick people into praying. W. Tozer said, “*Whatever it may be in our Christian experience that originates outside of Scriptures should, for that very reason, be suspect until it can be shown to be in accord with them.*” Tozer continued, “...*no experience can be proved to be genuine unless we can find chapter and verse authority for it in Scriptures.*”

## SOME REJECTED THE PREACHING

Sometimes people rejected the Holy Spirit like they did when Stephen preached. He preached with the power of the Holy Spirit upon him; however, before his message was over, Stephen lay dead on the side of the road. Maybe if he had learned a few mind-manipulating tricks, he might have survived and built a big church.



It is only in recent years that we have stooped to replacing the power of the Holy Spirit with carnal gimmicks. Spurgeon, Moody, and all fundamental preachers of yesteryear would have risen up in protest against anyone who suggested people could be manipulated into saying a prayer to be saved. **This is a damnable heresy! Why are our so-called fundamentalists silent?**

## THE CONTEXT OF WHAT PETER CALLED DAMNABLE HERESY

**Second Peter 1:16** says, “*For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.*” The word cunning means, “*Something crafty used in attaining an end.*”

A fable is “*A narration without solid foundation used to enforce a useful truth in the mind.*” In the context of Peter’s message we see only six verses later that there would

be “...teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies...” Mind manipulated salvation decisions without repentance is a damnable heresy!

## **CHURCHES LOOKING SUCCESSFUL**

**A.W. Tozer said,** “A Christian congregation can survive and often appear to prosper in the community by the exercise of human talent without any touch from the Holy Spirit!” He also said, “...we are left to our own devices and forced to make up the lack of spontaneous worship by bringing in countless cheap activities to hold the attention of the church people.” The Bible says in **Second Timothy 3:1**, “This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come.”

## **THE CONDITION OF THE CHURCH**

First and Second Timothy, that God is not talking about perilous times in the world. God is referring to “*perilous times*” in our local churches. Verse five says churches would be “...*having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof.*” We deny the power of God and have only a “*form*” when we replace the power of the Holy Spirit with mind-manipulating tricks to get people to pray a prayer.

Verse five, referring to the men in verse two says, “...*from such turn away.*” (We are not commanded to turn away from the unsaved, we are commanded to witness to them - “even unto the end of the age.”) The Bible does not say get together in meetings with disobedient Christians, and pretend there is no problem because they are your friends. It says, “...*from such turn away.*”

## **IT WAS WRITTEN TO PASTORS**

First and Second Timothy was written to the pastor and we as pastors would do well to let God preach His Word to us before we get excited about preaching it to the congregation. Should we expect our people to obey the Word of God while we refuse to obey it?

## **THE CHURCH AT EPHESUS**

Before we look at the serious problems Timothy faced in his local church, and the serious problems we are facing today, we will take a look at how the church at Ephesus began. When Paul arrived in Ephesus, it was the second largest city in the Roman Empire. It was the capital of the Roman province of Asia. Timothy pastored in a large, and wicked city.

The main street extended from the baths to the theatre and was called Arcadian Street. There were galleries and shops all along either side of the street, which was 1,700 feet long and thirty-six feet wide. Since it extended to the harbour, it was also referred to as “Harbour Street.”

Timothy must have felt inferior to the task to pastoring a local church in that city. Unlike other temples, this building was made of marble. There were 127 columns that rose sixty feet above the foundation. It housed many works of art, including four ancient bronze statues of Amazons, sculpted by the finest artists at the time. The temple was adorned with golden pillars, silver statuettes, and was decorated with many valuable paintings.





## MORE INFORMATION THAN ANY OTHER CHURCH

The Bible gives us more information about the local church at Ephesus than any other church in the New Testament. In **Acts chapters nineteen and twenty**, we read of the establishment of the church. The Book of Ephesians was written concerning problems that had crept into the assembly.

**The Books of First and Second Timothy** were written to the pastor of the church who was given the responsibility to deal with those problems.

In **Revelation 2:1-7** concerning the sad condition of the church forty years after it had been established. His rebuke was sharp. He said, *"Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent"* (Revelation 2:5).

## PAUL'S MINISTRY IN EPHEBUS

In **Acts 19:8**, we read, *"And he went into the synagogue, and spake boldly for the space of three months, disputing and persuading the things concerning the kingdom of God. But when divers were hardened, and believed not, but spake evil of that way before the multitude, he departed from them, and separated the disciples, disputing daily in the school of one Tyrannus. And this continued by the space of two years; so that all they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks."*

Paul continued with his God-given responsibilities and as a result we read, *"...fear fell on them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified. And many that believed came, and confessed, and shewed their deeds. Many of them also which used curious arts brought their books together, and burned them before all men: and they counted the price of them, and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver. So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed"* (Acts 19:17-20).

## PAUL'S WARNING

Paul had a group of Believers in that local church that meant business for God. They had a sweet spirit of unity and love; however, Paul saw a danger looming on the horizon that most of them did not see.

In **Acts 20:28-32**, Paul admonished **the leaders** to *"Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears."*

## PASTORS DID NOT HEED PAULS' WARNINGS

In the verses above, Paul was talking to the "overseers." He **warned pastors** to *"take heed to yourselves."* He **warned pastors** to *"feed"* the Christians in that local church. He **warned pastors** about the *"grievous wolves"* that would go after the church members. He **warned pastors** *"night and day"* for *"three years,"* and he wept as he warned them.

The problems that arose were not taken care of quickly, and their local church was in serious trouble in a few short years. **Ecclesiastes 8:11** says, *“Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil.”*

In **Acts chapter nineteen**, the church at Ephesus was in excellent health. In the **Book of Ephesians**, the health of the church was in declining health. In **First & Second Timothy**, the church was in a critical condition. In **Revelation chapter two**, the same church was sick unto death.

**First and Second Timothy places the cause of the problem directly at the feet of the pastor.**

## First Timothy Chapter One

**Verse 1**, *“Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the commandment of God our Saviour, and Lord Jesus Christ, which is our hope.”*

When Paul was a little boy growing up in Tarsus, he never thought that he would be named in the Word of God in over 180 verses. What a frustration it must be for Satan to see Paul used to the glory of God in such a marvelous way, since it was Satan’s goal to use Paul to destroy the cause of Christ.

Paul and Timothy were very good friends. It was very official for Paul to begin his letter to his friend Timothy with *“Paul an apostle;”* however, Paul was speaking for God about a very serious matter. This was not just a letter from an *“old buddy.”* Paul writes to this young pastor, *“...by commandment of God.”* It is not a light thing with God when a church gets sick unto death, and it is not a light thing when a young pastor is given the responsibility to deal with the mess someone else made.

### **“CLEANING UP THE MESS”**

At the very beginning, when Paul challenges Timothy about the mess he must deal with, Paul reminds the pastor that his *“hope”* is in Christ. When a pastor has church problems to deal with, he needs to keep his focus on the Lord. In every detail of leadership in the local church, the pastor needs to know what Christ would do in the situation **and do it!**

### **CHRIST DIDN’T PREACH A SERMON, HE MADE A WHIP**

It is interesting that the first time we find Christ upset about sin, it had to do with sin in His *“Father’s house.”* **John 2:15-17** tells us, Jesus *“...made a scourge of small cords, he drove them all out of the temple.”* They had made His *“... Father’s house an house of merchandise.”*

### **DECREASING THE ATTENDANCE**

This was not a time to start a campaign to increase the attendance. It was His goal to decrease the attendance. We read, *“...he drove them all out of the temple.”* He was not concerned about what this might do concerning the offerings.



We read in **John 2:15**, He “...poured out the changers’ money.” He was not concerned about the building looking good for the visitors; He “...overthrew the tables.”

## **CLEAN UP THE MESS BEFORE ORGANIZING**

There are many Church Manuals on the market these days, focusing on the organizational aspect of a local church. It is important that our churches be organized and “...all things be done decently and in order.” (First Corinthians 14:40); however, Jesus did not focus on organizing the mess in His “Father’s house.” He dealt with the problem.

## **WHEN TO WHIP AND WHEN TO WEEP**

When they beat Christ unmercifully and even crucified Him, He said, “*Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do*” (Luke 23:34). He responded differently when they were abusing His “Father’s house.” He made a whip and took care of the problem.

He didn’t preach a little sermon and throw in a few sentences about the problem, hoping they would get the message. He attacked the problem head on! This is the same principle every pastor should take. When someone is beating on the pastor personally, to be like Christ is to say, “*Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.*” When they cause problems in the local church, it is time to take some serious action to correct the problem. (*We are not suggesting you use a whip*).

The local church belongs to Christ. He said it was His church. In **Matthew 16:18**, He said, “...I will build my church.” He did not say the pastor would build the pastor’s church; and neither did He say pastors will build Christ’s church. He said He would do the building. He did, however, leave pastors with the responsibility of doing things in the church the way He wants them done.

## **WHAT DID CHRIST MEAN WHEN HE SAID HE WOULD BUILD HIS CHURCH?**

It is important to understand that the word “*build*” used here, refers to building something that is physical rather than spiritual. The same word is used when referring to the following structures:

- **Matthew 23:29**, “...ye build the tombs.”
- **Luke 11:47**, “...ye build the sepulchres.”
- **Luke 12:18**, “...I will pull down my barns, and build greater.”
- **Luke 14:28**, “...build a tower.”
- **Acts 15:16**, “...build again the tabernacle.”

A different word is used when referring to a person being built spiritually. The Bible says in **Acts 20:32**, “*And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up.*” The pastor will certainly have some responsibilities concerning the physical aspects in the local church; however, the pastors’ first responsibility is not to increase in numbers but rather clean up the mess and bring the people to a spiritual maturity.

## **TWO RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PASTOR**

We will see in First and Second Timothy that the pastors’ responsibility is not to keep the church full but to keep the church pure. It is more important to have purity in the

pews than a large number of people in the pews who have no intention of doing anything for God. Timothy's responsibility as a pastor, however, did not negate his responsibility as an individual Christian to be actively witnessing to the lost. Pastors need to be very careful to separate these two responsibilities as God does.

**Verse 2**, *"Unto Timothy, my own son in the faith: Grace, mercy peace, from God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord."*

### **THREE THINGS THE PASTOR NEEDS**

Paul focused on three things that Timothy needed to be sure were a part of his life as he battled the problems in his local church. They are *"grace," "mercy" and "peace."*

#### **GRACE**

Years ago, I heard someone say that the word *"grace,"* when dealing with Christians means, the desire and the ability to do Gods' will. In recent years, I have done much personal study concerning the word *"grace"* and have come to the conclusion that this is an excellent definition of the word.

The first time the word *desires* is found in Scripture is in **Psalm 37:4** where we read, *"Delight thyself also in the LORD; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart."* This does not mean if we desire a new car He will give it to us. It means He will put His desires in our heart.

- **Psalm 37:4** says, *"...he shall give thee the desires of thine heart."*
- **Proverbs 3:34** says, *"...he giveth grace unto the lowly."*
- **James 4:6** says, *"But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble."*
- **First Peter 5:5** says, *"...God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble."*

#### **PAULS' DESIRES CAME FROM GOD**

In spite of the major hardships, Paul was facing in a dungeon, his focus was always on helping others. In **Romans 10:1** he said, *"Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved."* In **Philippians 4:17** he said, *"I desire fruit that may abound to your account."*

In **Colossians 1:9** Paul said his, *"desire"* was that they, *"...might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding."* God had put some very special desires in the heart of Paul that led him to live a life in constant concern for others. Timothy would also need to have God's desires foremost in his heart if he was going to handle the problems he faced in the local church. He would need the desire and the ability to do God's work, God's way.

#### **MERCY**

A mother once approached Napoleon seeking a pardon for her son. The emperor replied that the young man had committed a certain offense twice and justice demanded death. *"But I don't ask for justice,"* the mother explained. *"I plead for mercy."* Napoleon replied, *"But your son does not deserve mercy."* The woman sobbed, *"Sir, it would not be mercy if he deserved it."* He spared the woman's son.

## PEACE

Peace consists not in the absence of trials, but in the presence of God. **Colossians 3:15** says, *“And let the peace of God rule (referee) in your hearts.”* Studies have found peace of mind can be lost by nursing a grudge, self-pity, and not cultivating love and compassion. Timothy would need to be careful to keep a Christ-like attitude concerning those in the local church who opposed him.

**Verse 3**, *“As I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus, when I went into Macedonia, that thou mightest charge some that they teach no other doctrine,”*

## STAY AND STAND

The pastor at Ephesus had some serious problems to take care of. Maybe leaving seemed like a good idea; however, it is always better to be in the storm in the will of God than in the sunshine without Him.

## DEAL WITH THE TROUBLEMAKERS QUICKLY

Paul commanded Timothy to, *“Charge some that they teach no other doctrine.”* It is very significant that even before the pastor was to preach sound doctrine, the first thing he was to do was to put a stop to those who were teaching false doctrine. Paul had warned this church in **Acts 20:29-30** saying, *“I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.”* **Ecclesiastes 8:11** says, *“Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil.”*

## PUT A STOP TO THE TROUBLEMAKERS

The first thing Timothy was charged with was to stop those who were teaching false doctrine. We will see later in both First and Second Timothy that the pastor in Ephesus took that responsibility very seriously. Timothy had the very difficult and unpopular responsibility of publicly exposing those who were guilty of spreading false teachings in the local church.

## DON'T LEAVE THE TAP RUNNING

I recently heard about a test that is given to mentally handicapped people to check on their learning process. They have a tap running water onto the floor. They give the slow learner a mop and ask him to mop up the water. If he shuts off the tap before he begins mopping, they know they have made progress. If he just begins mopping the floor while leaving the tap running, they know he still has much to learn. One of the main reasons apostasy has flooded our churches is many pastors have left the tap of apostasy running while trying to build numerically.



## HOW IS A PASTOR TO DO THE CHARGING?

Verse three says the pastor is commanded to *“...charge some that they teach no other doctrine.”* Paul repeats the command in verse eighteen where we read, *“This charge I commit unto thee, son Timothy.”* Concerning this charge Paul said, *“...that thou by them mightest war a good warfare.”*



## A GOOD EXAMPLE OF HOW TO CHARGE

Pastors have an example of how to do the charging by looking at Paul's charge to Timothy. We read in **First Timothy 5:21** Paul said, *"I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels, that thou observe these things without preferring one before another, doing nothing by partiality."* It matters not if the person who is speaking perverse things is a large financial contributor or if he contributes little. The pastor is to deal with the troublemakers, *"...without preferring one before another, doing nothing by partiality."*

In **First Timothy 6:13** Paul said, *"I give thee charge in the sight of God..."* That particular charge had to do with the previous verse that reads, *"Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses."*

Paul did not skirt around the issue. Before the pastor was to organize an attendance drive, he was to *"...charge some that they teach no other doctrine,"*

## DEALING WITH THOSE WHO LISTEN TO THE TROUBLEMAKERS

**Verse 4** says, *"Neither give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which minister questions, rather than godly edifying which is in faith: so do."* As well as charging those who sowed discord to quit their wickedness, the pastor was also given the responsibility to charge some church members that they do not listen, (*"give heed"*) to those that, *"...minister questions, rather than godly edifying."*

## THE LISTENER IS A WICKED DOER AND A LIAR

It is not only the one who sows discord that needs to be dealt with. God considers those who listen to him are *"wicked."*

- **Proverbs 17:4** says, *"A wicked doer giveth heed to false lips; and a liar giveth ear to a naughty tongue."* Wicked people choose wicked people for their companions.
- **Amos 3:3** says, *"Can two walk together, except they be agreed?"* To listen to a troublemaker is to give consent to his wickedness.
- **Proverbs 4:14** says, *"Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men."*
- **Proverbs 13:20** says, *"He that walketh with wise men shall be wise: but a companion of fools shall be destroyed."*
- **Psalms 119:63** *"I am a companion of all them that fear thee, and of them that keep thy precepts."*

The person who is sowing discord in the local church does not fear God nor does he keep His precepts. A liar is one who creates a false or misleading impression. A person who listens to the one who sows discord may justify himself as being too kind to rebuke the talebearer; however, he is creating a false or misleading impression to the one he is listening to. Anyone who purposely creates a false or misleading impression is a liar, and God says he or she is wicked.



People who do a lot of *"vain jangling"* will soon stop, if they have no one who will listen to them. We will see that Timothy, like Paul and like Jesus, did not hint at the issue in a sermon, hoping the troublemakers might get the message. They dealt with it head on!

## THE HARM THEY CAN CAUSE

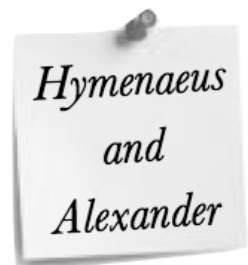
- **Proverbs 6:12-14**, “A naughty person, a wicked man, walketh with a froward mouth. Frowardness is in his heart, he deviseth mischief continually; he soweth discord.”
- **Proverbs 28:25**, “He that is of a proud heart stirreth up strife.”
- **Proverbs 16:28**, “A froward man soweth strife: and a whisperer separateth chief friends.”
- **Hebrews 12:15**, “Looking diligently...lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled; ”

## VERSES GIVEN TO THE LOCAL CHURCH

**Second Thessalonians 3:6**, “Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us.”

The command is to “*withdraw yourselves*,” which makes it impossible to listen to anyone spewing discord. The Bible goes on to say in verse fourteen, “*And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, (if he refuses to withdraw from the disorderly) note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed.*”

The word “*note*” means, “...to make special mention of something and to make a note means to record something in writing.” The pastor’s responsibility includes stopping those, “...whose mouths must be stopped” (Titus 1:11). and charging others that they do not “*give heed*” (listen) to the one who sows discord.



## MANY DIFFERENT PROJECTS

Pastors should not look at the trying situations that come along in the local church as problems but rather projects that God has entrusted to the pastor to take care of. As a pastor, I have had to deal with people who were upset because we had puppets teaching the children in junior church.

Others have said we should not have a program for children or youth meetings. One man felt we should be keeping the seven feasts of the Old Testament. One woman got upset because I loosened my tie while preaching.

Another woman challenged me saying there is not a verse in the entire Bible that suggests a church should have a nursery. I said there is no verse suggesting we should have a washroom either. However, the Bible does say church members are to “*submit*” to the leadership in the local church, and the God-given leadership in this church has decided we will have both a nursery and a washroom. (I also told her it is impossible to “*submit*” unless she disagreed. When one agrees, there is no submission.) She decided to leave the church, and her husband followed his wife to yet another church.

## SELF-APPOINTED MISSIONARIES

Some people in the local church at Ephesus felt it was their God-given responsibility to be missionaries to the people in the church, to teach them about their pet doctrine.

Pastors face the same situation today. One man told me he did not really want to come to our church; however, he was there because God sent him to keep me straight. (I haven't been able to find that local church office in my Bible.)

## **SOME BETTER THINGS TO TALK ABOUT**

In verse five Paul said, *"Now the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned."* Love, a pure heart, a good conscience, and faith are better things to talk about than subjects like church nurseries not being Scriptural. Paul called it *"vain jangling"* in verse six and said, *"vain jangling"* was responsible for turning some aside.

## **DESIRING TO BE TEACHERS**



The root problem was, and is, pride. Verse seven says that they were *"Desiring to be teachers."* They feel they are smarter than the average person in the church, including the pastor, and desired to teach them. It would be great, if these people who desire to be teachers would go out and teach the *"...lawless and disobedient, the ungodly sinners, unholy profane, murderers, whoremongers, them that defile themselves with mankind, menstealers, liars,"* and all the rest mentioned in the next few verses rather than messing up the minds of Christians in the church.

**Verse seven goes on to say they don't understand what they are talking about.** Verse eight tells us in Ephesus, they were teaching that they needed go back under the *"law"* rather than the *"glorious gospel"* that was committed to Paul.

## **WAR A GOOD WARFARE - NO PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE**

Like Timothy, pastors have the tremendous responsibility to heed the charge given in verse eighteen where Paul said, *"...war a good warfare."* One of the reasons many local churches are in the mess they are in is because pastors want to live in peaceful coexistence with people who are causing division in the church. In the next verse, Paul exposes two troublemakers by name. He speaks of *"...Hymenaeus and Alexander; whom I have delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme."* There was no peaceful coexistence with those who sought to cause division in the local church!

## **TIMOTHY'S PROBLEM WITH JUDAISM**

**Verses 8-11,** *"But we know that the law is good, if a man use it lawfully; Knowing this, that the law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners, for unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers, For whoremongers, for them that defile themselves with mankind, for menstealers, for liars, for perjured persons, and if there be any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine; According to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, which was committed to my trust."*

## **OUR PROBLEM TODAY WITH "DAMNABLE HERESIES"**

Today we face different forms of false doctrine. One of the most wicked heresies infecting our churches today is Calvinism. One thing pastors better get straight is that



those who hold to false doctrine need to be handled like Paul commanded it must be handled. In recent years those who promote Calvin's heresy have infiltrated fundamental Baptist Bible colleges, and therein lies the problem. They never should have been allowed to infiltrate. The problem is fundamental leaders want to live in peaceful coexistence with their friends even if they are promoting heresy.

### **“IN EVERYTHING GIVE THANKS”**

**Verse 1**, *“And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry.”*

In the middle of Paul's instructions to Timothy about the serious problems, he expresses his thanks to the Lord for enabling him to do what God wanted him to do. On the day Paul was saved we read, *“And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do”* (Acts 9:6). Every pastor has something God wants him to do and God has enabled him to do it. God does not want every pastor to imitate other pastors.

### **TAKE CARE OF YOUR OWN RESPONSIBILITIES**

In **Acts 20:24** we read Paul was concerned about his God-given responsibilities. He said, *“...neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus.”* Paul kept his focus on his responsibilities and at the end of his life he wrote in Second Timothy 4:7, *“...I have finished my course,”* Paul finished his course, *“...with joy.”*

### **“IN EVERYTHING GIVE THANKS”**

In **First Thessalonians 5:18** Paul wrote, *“In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.”* He did not say give thanks for every thing, he said, *“...in every thing.”* In Paul's report in Second Corinthians 11:24-28, we read that in “every thing” Paul gave thanks in...

- **Verse 23**, *“...in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft.”*
- **Verse 24**, *“Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one.”*
- **Verse 25**, *“Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep.”*
- **Verse 26**, *“In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren.”*
- **Verse 27**, *“In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness.”*
- **Verse 28**, *“Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches.”*

Even as Paul writes to Timothy about being thankful, he is sitting in a dungeon waiting his execution.

### **TRIALS AHEAD FOR THE PASTOR**

Paul was saying Timothy, *“...I have finished my course,”* now you finish yours. Timothy was facing some very trying times in his local church. Paul wanted him to

understand that he needed to be thankful that God trusted him with such a tremendous responsibility. Paul wanted Timothy's testimony also to be *"And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry."*

Paul said he *"...was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief"* (Verse 13).

- As a *"blasphemer,"* he had attacked the *Person* of Christ.
- As a *"persecutor,"* he had persecuted the *people* of Christ.
- As *"injurious,"* he had hindered the *program* of Christ.

Paul said, *"I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief."* When he was persecuting Christians, he thought he was doing the will of God. He was ignorant of the fact that the local church age was getting underway. He simply did not understand that he was fighting against God.

**Verse 14,** *"And the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus."* Considering Paul's hatred of Christians and his hatred of Christ, his conversion was a great example of the grace and the love of Christ. Also the grace and love of Christ is seen in the faith it produced in Paul.

**Verse 15,** *"This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief."* The closer Paul got to the Lord, the more he saw himself as he really was. He ended his life considering himself to be *"the chief of sinners."* Like Job of old, we read when Job got close to the Lord through the circumstances God allowed the Devil to put him through, Job said, *"I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee. Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes"* (Job 42:5-6). The circumstances the pastor must go through will either make him bitter or better. The only difference in the two words is the letter "I."

## PAUL WAS A PATTERN

*"Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all longsuffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting."* There is far more to being a pastor than looking good in the eyes of those who have their shallow expectations of what a pastor is supposed to accomplish.

Pastors are called upon by God to be a pattern of, *"...all longsuffering."* God's church manual for the pastor speaks of keeping the church pure, stopping the wolves at the door, and being a pattern to, *"...shew forth all longsuffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting."*

## "ME FIRST"



When Jesus was seeking disciples, many had a *"me first"* problem. In **Luke 9:59** we read, *"And he said unto another, Follow me. But he said, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father."* In **Luke 9:61** it says, *"And another also said, Lord, I will follow thee; but let me first go bid them farewell, which are at home at my house."*

There are few who would take the position of Paul who said, “...that in ***me first*** Jesus Christ might shew forth all longsuffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting” (Verse 16).

**Verse 17**, “Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.”

Paul sits in the dampness of the dungeon, having been put there by Caesar. Caesar felt very important as he ruled and passed his decrees; however, his kingdom came to an end, and his body has laid in a grave now for about 2,000 years. Paul rejoices in the fact that his faith rests in “...the King eternal.” The King who has “...honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.”

## **BACK TO THE BUSINESS AT HAND**

**Verse 18**, “This charge I commit unto thee, son Timothy, according to the prophecies which went before on thee, that thou by them mightest war a good warfare.”

In Paul’s letter to this church, we read in **Ephesians 6:10-17**, Paul talks to the pastors in the local church, about the warfare they are involved in.

- Paul talked about “*armour*.”
- Paul talked about “*the shield*.”
- Paul talked about “*fiery darts*.”
- Paul talked about a “*helmet*.”
- Paul talked about a “*sword*.”
- Paul talked about the “*warfare*” (First Corinthians 9:7).
- Paul talked about “...*the weapons of our warfare*” (Second Corinthians 10:4).
- Paul talked about enduring “...*hardness, as a good soldier*” (Second Timothy 2:3).



Paul commanded Timothy to “...war a good warfare.” At the end of his life Paul said, “*I have fought a good fight*” (Second Timothy 4:7). Our modern-day church manuals are helpful concerning the organization of the mechanical things in a church; however, God’s church manual deals with the more important issues. In verse eighteen Paul said, “*This charge I commit unto thee...that thou by them mightest war a good warfare*.” One can be sure that when a pastor faithfully follows God’s directions as Paul did in the next verse, that a warfare will be underway.

**Verses 19-20**, “Holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck: Of whom is Hymenaeus and Alexander; whom I have delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme.”

## **“FAITH AND A GOOD CONSCIENCE”**

The words “*faith*” and “*conscience*” are found together in three verses in First Timothy. Paul mentions, “...*a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned. From which some having swerved have turned aside unto vain jangling*” (First Timothy 1:5,6). In verse nineteen he talks of “*Holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck*.” In chapter three Paul talks about, “*Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience*.”



## THE SELF-APPOINTED TEACHERS AND THE HARM THEY CAUSED

Hymenaeus, a self-appointed teacher, is seen promoting disunity in the church. One of his converts was Alexander. By the time we get to **Second Timothy 2:17** we find Hymenaeus is doing much harm in the local church at Ephesus. He has picked up another assistant in his work for the Devil by the name of Philetus. In Second Timothy 4:14 we read that Alexander the coppersmith had joined the team of infiltrators in the church. Paul said, *“Alexander the coppersmith did me much evil: the Lord reward him according to his works.”*

The Bible says in **First Corinthians 15:33** *“Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners.”* We read in **Acts 19:33** that Alexander had stood firm during the riot in this local church. He changed his position under the influence of Hymenaeus and his followers. Spiritual shipwrecks do not just happen. There are always reasons when people make shipwreck of their lives.

## THE RESULT OF A WRONG DECISION

**Verse 19**, *“Holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck.”*

The phrase *“put away”* literally means *“to thrust or push away.”* It refers to *“an intentional turning from truth to error.”* Somewhere along the way Hymenaeus, Alexander, Philetus, and all those who listened to them rejected the sound doctrine that had been preached. They all ended up in the sad state they were in because they intentionally turned from the truth and embraced error.

## NO CHOICE BUT TO CHOOSE

Every day when we wake up, we immediately begin making choices. Each day when trying circumstances come along, we have no choice but to choose. Hymenaeus, Alexander, and Philetus all made choices. In **Deuteronomy 30:15** God said, *“I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil.”* He continued in verse nineteen saying, *“I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live.”*

## THE BACKSLIDDEN HEIFER

The move from truth to error is never made in an instant! The Bible gives an example of being backslidden in **Hosea 4:16** where we read, *“For Israel slideth back as a backsliding heifer.”* The backslider is like a heifer or an ox that is in a double yoke. Both of the oxen are supposed to pull together to drag the cart or plow forward. The backsliding heifer decides to turn to the side or to stop in its tracks. To be backslidden is to refuse to go forward or to turn from God’s prescribed course.

## SHIPWRECKS HAPPEN FOR A REASON

Shipwrecks take place when ships are allowed to drift with no set course. Sometimes they have set an incorrect course that causes them to be smashed upon the rocks. Ships can also be wrecked when they are overloaded. **Hebrews 12:1** says, *“...let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us.”* Paul’s responsibility of dealing with two men in the local church is seen in the next verse.



**Verse 20**, *“Of whom is Hymenaeus and Alexander; whom I have delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme.”*

## **LOCAL CHURCH DISCIPLINE IN THE CHURCH AT CORINTH**

When dealing with a discipline problem (project) in the Corinthian church, Paul commanded them, *“To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump”* (First Corinthians 5:5-7).

## **THE FOUNDATION FOR BIBLE DISCIPLINE IS LOVE**

Paul begins in chapter one in verse fourteen with a focus on *“love.”* He ends his letter to the pastor in chapter six with a focus on *“love.”* When he wrote Timothy, his second letter in chapter one in verse seven and thirteen his focus was still on *“love.”* He ends his second letter to the pastor in chapter four with a focus on *“love.”* Our first concern must be our love for Christ and His people. He said, *“If ye love me, keep my commandments.”* (John 14:15) **There is much more to real love than emotional sweet words that might make us feel warm and fuzzy.** The apostle who was noted for his love said, *“...let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth”* (First John 3:18).

## **NO LITTLE SERMON HOPING TO FIX THINGS**

As previously mentioned, the first time we find Christ upset about sin was when He took a whip into the Temple to straighten things out that needed straightening out. The foundation for it all was love. Jesus loved His Father, He loved His Father's house, and He loved every sinner that was in the Temple that day. **Discipline is not something you do to someone, it is something you do for them.** He did not love them any less with a whip in His hand than He did when He was hanging on the cross for the same people.

## **“THAT THEY MAY LEARN”**

Paul said they were *“...delivered unto Satan, that they may learn...”* Discipline in the local church is not done to get rid of someone. It is done to help them. In the Old Testament we read God commanded Moses in **Deuteronomy 4:10** to, *“Gather me the people together, and I will make them hear my words, that they may learn to fear me all the days that they shall live upon the earth, and that they may teach their children.”* In **Deuteronomy 31:12** God said, *“Gather the people together...that they may hear, and that they may learn, and fear the LORD your God, and observe to do all the words of this law.”*

When God's people refused to listen to the God-given leadership during the Old Testament, God turned them over to their enemies. **Psalms 106:42** says, *“Their enemies also oppressed them, and they were brought into subjection under their hand.”*

In the New Testament age Jesus said, *“Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth”* (John 16:13). When Christians like Hymenaeus and Alexander, refuse to listen to the Holy Spirit as He speaks through the God-given leadership in the local church, they are to be disciplined out of the local church. In **First Timothy 1:20** Paul said they are to be *“...delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme.”*

## LEARNING NOT TO BLASPHEME

We read in verse thirteen Paul referred to himself as “...a blasphemer,” however, he said he “...obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief.” When Paul met Christ on the road to Damascus, two things happened.

First, he responded immediately concerning his need to trust Christ as his Saviour.

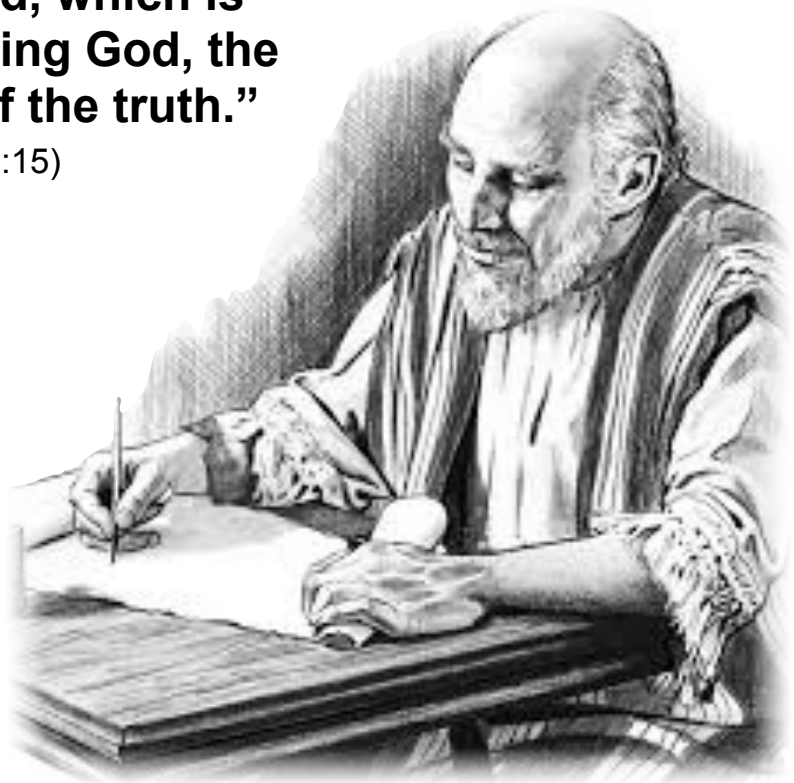
Second, he responded immediately about what God would have him do as a Christian. When God spoke to Paul we read, “And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?” (Acts 9:6)

## HYMENAEOUS AND ALEXANDER WERE WITHOUT EXCUSE

Hymenaeus and Alexander had been members of the local church in Ephesus when God was blessing it in a marvelous way. **They were not doing what they did in ignorance.** They made a conscious decision to fight against the leadership God had sent, and God never takes that wicked sin lightly. Therefore, concerning Hymenaeus and Alexander, Paul said, “...I have delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme.”

**“That thou mayest know how  
thou oughtest to behave thyself  
in the house of God, which is  
the church of the living God, the  
pillar and ground of the truth.”**

(First Timothy 3:15)



# First Timothy Chapter Two

**Verse 1**, *“I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men.”* Paul focused on the subject of prayer. He said, *“first of all”* stressing that the most important thing we can do in the midst of troubles in the church is to pray.

## FOUR ELEMENTS OF PRAYER

Paul lists four elements that ought to be included in our praying.

They are:

1. **Supplications – Making requests.** One thing for sure is the local church that is in trouble will have many requests to solve problems that only God can solve. To do anything in the power of the flesh will usually do more harm than good.
2. **Prayers – The act of worship** that should accompany prayer. Too many times, especially when facing problems, we pray with our own needs in mind, taking no time to worship the Lord.
3. **Intercessions – Taking the needs of others before the Lord.** We have already seen that there were some real troublemakers in the local church at Ephesus. Those people had some needs. Second Thessalonians 3:14,15 says, *“And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed. Yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother.”*
4. **Giving of Thanks** – The phrase *“give thanks”* is found in thirty-one verses of the Old Testament and nine times in the New Testament. First Thessalonians 5:18 says, *“In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.”*

**Verses 2,3**, *“For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour.”* God’s Word is plain concerning His structure of authority in the home, the church, the government, and on the job. We are to pray for *“...all that are in authority.”*

Since we are commanded to pray for *“...all that are in authority,”* there is no authority on earth that cannot be influenced by prayer. When we think of authority we usually think of governmental authority; however, this verse includes *“...all that are in authority.”*

## CHILDREN PRAYING FOR THEIR PARENTS WOULDN’T THAT BE NICE?

What parent wouldn’t be pleased if they knew when their children disagreed with them that they would go to the Lord honestly seeking the Lord’s will in the issue? It would have also been better if Alexander the coppersmith (Second Timothy 4:4) had honestly sought the Lord’s will in whatever issue he had with the pastor; however, we read he did Paul *“much harm.”*

**The pastor is not always right; however, he is always the pastor**, and he is always the God-given authority in the local church. If a church member believes the pastor is doing something contrary to the Scriptures, he should, *“...first of all,”* pray. When we sincerely pray, it always does something for the person who is praying. Christians who sincerely pray will *“lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty,”* and will not be approaching the pastor in an attack mode.

Prayer will give the concerned Christian the **meek and quiet spirit** he needs to talk to his God-given authority in a Scriptural manner. The main goal of every pastor and every church member should be to do what is *“...good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour.”* Fighting against God-given authority is never *“...acceptable in the sight of God.”* It is no more acceptable with God for a church member to fight against the pastor than it is for teenagers to fight against the God-given authority in the home. What is acceptable is that we, *“...pray for all that are in authority.”*



## **CONTRARY TO CALVIN'S HERESY - GOD WOULD HAVE ALL MEN TO BE SAVED**

**Verse 4**, *"Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth."* Everything Paul said in his instructions to the pastor revolved around the truth being foremost in everything done or preached in the local church.

- **First Timothy 2:4** - *"...the knowledge of **the truth**."*
- **First Timothy 2:7** - *"...I speak **the truth**"*
- **First Timothy 3:15** - *"...the ground of **the truth**."*
- **First Timothy 4:3** - *"...know **the truth**."*
- **First Timothy 6:5** - *"...destitute of **the truth**."*

**We have seen in chapter one that the pastor was to stop those who preached false doctrine, and then he was to preach the truth.** The false doctrine that was prevalent in the church in Ephesus had to do with those who were telling church members that they needed to go back under the Old Testament Law. We do not have the same form of false doctrine today; however, there will always be someone who will attempt to lead church members astray.

In verse four we read very plainly that God's desire is for *"all men"* to be saved. Calvinism teaches that God has predestined some to Hell. **This heresy is an outright attack on the character of God.**

The teaching that God has brought multitudes of people into this world for the purpose of seeing them burn in Hell is not only another doctrine, it is heresy! The pastor's **first** responsibility as recorded in First Timothy is *"...that thou mightest charge some that they teach no other doctrine."* (First Timothy 1:3) It does not say if they happen to be friends just overlook their heresy and invite them to come and teach in your Bible college.

A survey\* was recently taken among *"Young **Fundamentalists**."* Seventy-two percent of those surveyed were graduates of Bob Jones University, Maranatha Baptist Bible College and Northland Baptist Bible College. Fifty-eight percent **of these "fundamentalists"** believed in Calvinism. (*Believed God created millions of people for no other purpose than to have them burn in hell for eternity.*) The colleges above would not endorse this heresy; however, the problem does not rest in what they are teaching, but what they are not teaching. It also rests in the fact that they allowed those who hold to doctrine that attacks the character of God to influence students.

\*(Survey can be seen at -<http://www.sharperiron.org/downloads/2005%20Young%20Fundamentalists%20Survey%20Results.pdf>)

**Verses 5,6**, *"For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time."*

These verses do not say Christ is the mediator between God and *some* men. It very plainly says here that Christ *"gave himself a ransom for **all**."* Since God desires all men to be saved, He made a provision for all men to be saved. Not only has the provision been set in place for **all**, God invites **all** to take advantage of it. Romans 10:13 says, *"For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."*

## **LET HIM BE ACCURSED**

Paul said in Galatians 1:8-9, *"But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach **any other gospel** unto you than that which we have preached unto you, **let him be accursed**."* **In case the pastor was slow to catch on, he said it again.** *"As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, **let him be accursed**."*

## PAUL WAS NOT TALKING ABOUT GOING TO HELL

The Greek word used here is *“anathema”* and has nothing to do with someone going to Hell. It is referring to the Old Testament type of discipline in the Temple. Strong's Concordance says *anathema* is *“A thing set up or laid by in order to be hung upon the walls or columns of the temple, or put in some other conspicuous place.”* **Someone who was guilty of heresy during the Old Testament was to be publicly exposed within the Temple.** God's plan for local church discipline also demands the same thing in the local church. Paul used the language he used here because the Galatians would understand it from their previous Temple structure for discipline.

## CHRISTIAN HERETICS

We have the incorrect idea that a heretic is someone who is totally opposed to the Scriptures; however, the only time the word heretic is mentioned in the New Testament is in Titus 3:10 where it refers to the Christian. There are many Scriptures commanding us not to allow false doctrine to be promoted in the local church.

Included in those instructions, we read in **Titus 3:10**, *“A man that is an heretick after the first and second admonition reject.”* According to Strong's Concordance the word *“heretic”* in this Scripture means, *“...a follower of a false doctrine.”*

The word *“admonition”* is used in the Bible when dealing with Christians. **Romans 15:14** refers to the Christian when it says, *“...admonish one another.”* **Second Thessalonians 3:14-15** says, *“And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed. Yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother.”*

## IF THIS IS NOT HERESY, WHAT IS?

Calvin said, *“We call predestination God's eternal decree, by which He compacted with Himself what He willed to become of each man. For all are not created in equal condition; rather, eternal life is foreordained for some, eternal damnation for others.”*

John Calvin taught that God is glorified by bringing people into this world for no other purpose than having them burn in Hell for eternity. The dictionary says heresy is, *“an opinion, doctrine, or practice contrary to the truth.”* According to Calvin God may have brought all the children in your home and in your church into this world so He could later watch them burn in Hell. **Calvinism is heresy! Those who promote heresy are heretics.** The command in **Second Thessalonians 3:14,15** *“And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed. Yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother.”*

The reason we have the disgusting results in the survey taken among graduates of the three Bible colleges mentioned previously, is the fact that the leaders in these colleges chose to disobey the command of God given in **Second Timothy 3:14,15**.

Referring to the fact that Jesus, *“...gave himself a ransom for all.”* (First Timothy 2:6), Paul said in verse seven, *“Whereunto (The fact that Christ, “...gave himself a ransom for all.”) I am ordained a preacher, and an apostle, (I speak the truth in Christ, and lie not;) a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and verity.”* Paul said he was *“ordained”* of God to deliver the message *“for all.”* **We are commanded to separate from anyone who teaches otherwise.**

## **AGAIN PAUL FOCUSES ON THE IMPORTANCE OF PRAYER**

**Verse 8**, *“I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting.”*

### **WITHOUT WRATH AND DOUBTING?**

An issue like Calvinism might stir up a spirit of contention; however, **Proverbs 13:10** says *“Only by pride cometh contention.”* It is a waste of time to cuddle our pride while we pray. The Bible says God’s people are to, *“...humble themselves, and pray...”* (Second Chronicles 7:14)

A close study of the Greek word translated doubting (*dialogismov*) will show that the word refers to human reasoning and opinion.

It is a waste of time to pray with a contentious spirit based on our opinions. **God does not have any opinions.** The phrase *“the truth”* is found in eighty-two verses in the Word of God, ten of which are found in First and Second Timothy.

Lifting up the hands while praying was a common thing to do in Paul’s day. Moses said, *“...I will spread abroad my hands unto the LORD.”* (Exodus 9:29). The Bible says, *“Solomon...spread forth his hands toward heaven.”* (First Kings 8:22) David said, *“Hear the voice of my supplications, when I cry unto thee, when I lift up my hands toward thy holy oracle”* (Psalm 28:2).

### **THE EMPHASIS IS ON HOLINESS**

The emphasis here is not the lifting up of the hands but rather, *“lifting up holy hands.”* Psalm 66:18 plainly says, *“If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me.”*

### **PROBLEMS WITH THE WOMEN**

**Verse 9**, *“In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array.”*

**Acts 17:4** tells us of multitudes being saved under the ministry of Paul and Silas, and many of them were women. In **Philippians 4:3** Paul referred to *“...those women which laboured with me in the gospel.”* There is nothing as beautiful in the local church as a woman who is determined to live in a manner that is honouring to God. According to verse nine, some women in the local church in Ephesus were not honouring God in how they dressed.

### **TWO WOMEN PORTRAYED BY HOW THEY DRESS**

There are many opinions concerning acceptable dress standards for Christians. The Bible has many examples of good and bad dress. For example, the *“great harlot”* in the Book of Revelation symbolizes the end-time apostate religious system. In contrast, *“the bride”* of Christ represents the Christian. The contrast between the two women is portrayed by their outward appearance.

There can be no denying the Bible teaches the inner purity of character of a Christian woman is revealed outwardly by the way she dresses. Paul mentions *“...In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel...which becometh women professing godliness”* (Verses 9,10).

**It can't get much plainer than that!** *"Modest apparel...becometh women professing godliness."* A woman who pretends to come humbly before God on Sunday, while dressing throughout the week (still before God) to be accepted by the world is a hypocrite.

**Romans 12:1** says, *"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service."* The word "reasonable" here means *"pertaining to reason or logic."* In other words, if you think it through, it is reasonable for God to ask us to do this. The word "service" refers to us being servants bond slaves. A bond slave is *"one who voluntarily gives himself up to another's will."*

### THREE GREEK WORDS

**First Timothy 2:9-10** says, *"In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in **modest** apparel, with **shamefacedness** and **sobriety**; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; But (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works."*

### WHAT IS MODEST?

God is not dealing here with the subject of wearing "pants." He is dealing with the word "modest." The dictionary says modest is *"Having or proceeding from a reluctance to call attention to oneself."* The Greek word "kosmios" means *"well-ordered, becoming,"* and *"dignified."* Verse nine refers to *"apparel...hair,"* and *"pearls."*

Something that is well-ordered or not well-ordered comes from a decision of our mind. **There can be no doubt that a woman's dress is a reflection of how she thinks.** **Proverbs 23:7** says, *"For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he."*

The Christian is commanded to renew the mind. **Romans 12:2** says, *"And be not conformed (Translated **"fashioned"** in First Peter 1:14) to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."* **First Peter 1:14** says we are to be *"As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance."*

### SHAMEFACEDNESS

The second Greek word Paul used is *aidos*, translated *"with shamefacedness."* The term *aidos* occurs only in this text in the New Testament; however, its usage is frequent in the literature of Hellenistic (Greek) Judaism. It means *"respect."* (To show a courteous yielding to the opinion, wishes, or judgment of another.)

*"Shamefacedness"* in this verse means if a woman respects God, her husband, her pastor, and her Christian friends, she will not want to embarrass any of them by how she dresses. To follow the dress standards of today's society will most certainly embarrass God, and should embarrass every Christian. Women who follow most of today's modern dress fashions, do not even have respect for themselves.

### WITH SOBRIETY

The third Greek word used to characterize the appropriate dress for the Christian woman is *"with sobriety."* The word *"sophrosune"* is a compound of two words: *"**sound**"* (sos) and *"**mind**"* (phrenes) It denotes mental vigilance, in the use of the mind to exercise restraint and self-control. The Christian women must show self-control by restraining any desire to wear attention-getting clothes. A Christian lady's dress should not say, *"Look at me, admire me,"* but rather, look at how Christ has changed me from the inside out.



Many Christian women today desire to look more like the models appearing on the covers of sensual magazines than they desire to look like what God wants. This is an indication that worldly magazines have more influence on them than the Word of God does.

## **THE PROBLEM STARTED WITH THE PASTORS**

Unfortunately, like today, the pastors who were responsible to set the standard in the church at Ephesus did not do it. We have seen both the men and the women in the local church at Ephesus began a downward skid that brought the church to its ruin. One of those changes had to do with how women changed their dress from being modest to following the standard of the world.

The answer to the modesty question can be solved in a few seconds if women would honestly determine to dress according to what is acceptable to the Lord. **Maybe more women would do that if pastors were faithful in preaching what is acceptable.**

**Romans 12:2** says, *“And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may **prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.**”*

Paul wrote much concerning the subject of Christians determining what is acceptable to God.

- **Romans 12:1** - “...**acceptable** unto God.”
- **Romans 12:2** - “...*prove what is that good, and **acceptable**, and perfect, will of God.*”
- **Romans 14:18** - “...**acceptable** to God.”
- **Romans 15:16** - “...*might be **acceptable**.*”
- **Ephesians 5:10** - “...*what is **acceptable** unto the Lord.*”
- **Philippians 4:18** - “...**acceptable**, wellpleasing to God.”
- **First Timothy 5:4** - “...**acceptable** before God.”

When Paul was writing to the pastor in Ephesus he again focused on what is “...*acceptable in the sight of God...*” (First Timothy 2:3) When Paul wrote to the very carnal church at Corinth, he said, “*What? know ye not that **your body** is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: **therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.***” (First Corinthians 6:19-20)

The church at Ephesus was following the Corinthian church down the path of carnality. The women were dressing immodestly and looking more like the prostitutes in the city rather than looking like Christian women.

## **GOD'S SHOWPIECE**

During the Old Testament dispensation God wanted the Nation of Israel to be His showpiece to the world. In the New Testament dispensation it is God's desire that the local church be God's showpiece.

## **YOU CAN JUDGE A BOOK BY ITS COVER!**

Anyone who takes a quick glance at a magazine stand will be able to tell what kind of magazines are there by the cover. On the same stand a person can buy a book giving information on how to fix your car or how to feed the lusts of the flesh.

When we see a car going down the street, we do not need to look under the hood to determine what kind of car it is. The body of the car reveals that information. The same thing is true of a person. When people see us, they do not see the heart, they see the body. The Bible says, “...**man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart**” (First Samuel 16:7).

In **Jeremiah 2:32** we read about “...a bride” and “her **attire**.” In **Proverbs 7:10** we read about “...a woman with the **attire of an harlot**.” In both cases we look on the outward appearance and immediately judge accordingly.

Paul simply challenges the Christian to “...*prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God*” (Romans 12:2). How a man or woman dresses makes a statement. For example, if the pastor showed up to preach on Sunday morning in skintight pants with his shirt unbuttoned halfway down his chest and six earrings in one ear, he would have already made a statement before he opened his mouth to preach. A woman who dresses immodestly also makes a statement without saying a word.

**Verse 10**, “*But (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works.*” Professing godliness and following the immodest standards of the world do not mix.

## **IT ALL COMES DOWN TO HOW MUCH OR HOW LITTLE WE LOVE CHRIST!**

I recently asked three young ladies who are members of our church to answer two questions.

1. What do you personally believe about the subject of modesty?
2. How did you develop your convictions about it?

### **Response # 1 - (Written at age twelve)**

#### **1. What do you personally believe about the subject of modesty?**

*“What I personally believe about the subject of modesty is that it makes us different from the world. I think that modesty is about being modest and making sure that your whole body is covered in a proper manner. Skirts should be below the knee. Modesty isn’t about showing your body off. God gave us our body and we need to be modest with it. Being modest, you need to set a good example for others to follow.”*

#### **2. How did you develop your convictions about it?**

*“How I develop my convictions about it is that I pray to God everyday to give me strength. It isn’t that easy as well at school. But our church and our family are going to hold a high standard. I also read my Bible so that I can know what God expects from me.*

*Dressing modestly is so that we aren’t giving wrong impressions as a Christian to others who are not Christians. We need to show other Christians who aren’t acting like one how to dress modestly, whether it be in any season, anytime or anywhere. We need to make our God proud while we are here on earth serving our Master.*

*It’s good to start things like this at a young age so that you can do it out in the real world when you’re older. Even if it may be hard for us in the government schools we still try to be modest, wearing skirts for everything and dressing our body appropriately.”*

### **Response # 2 - (Written at age twelve)**

#### **1. What do you personally believe about the subject of modesty?**

*“I believe that modesty is very important for a Christian because Christians need to be an example for Christ.”*

#### **2. How did you develop your convictions about it?**

*“I realized that being a Christian means that you don’t only need to act like a Christian and read your Bible, you have to dress like one and be an example that way as well....It is important to be a good Christian example no matter where you are.”*

### **Response # 3 - (Written at age thirteen)**

#### **1. What do you personally believe about the subject of modesty?**

*“I believe that modesty is extremely important in a Christian’s life...My thoughts are mainly based around this verse: “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. (Romans 12:1) Anything from the Bible is not a suggestion; it is a command! The Lord doesn’t “suggest” we present our bodies a living sacrifice; He commands it! When I get up in the morning to get dressed and I pull an outfit out of my dresser/closet, I first think, ‘Is this modest and acceptable unto God?’ Meaning, would God like it if I were to wear this?”*

## 2. How did you develop your convictions about it?

*"I developed my convictions about dressing modestly by reading the Bible and really thinking hard about why I need to dress modestly. We should dress modestly to please the Lord. If I really want to please the Lord and I really love Him, then I want to do everything I can for Him. He knows whether I want to please Him or not. I need to show I love the Lord with all my heart, and I do!*

*Being a girl in the public school system, is a challenge to dress modestly. Almost every day there is someone that asks me, 'Why do you wear a skirt every day?' I just answer 'The Lord commands us to present our bodies a living sacrifice,' and they say, 'What???' I explain to them that God has standards for Christians. They are preached in our church, but that isn't the only reason why I do it. It's because the Lord commands it; and if He commands it, we must be obedient...He wants us to do it with a willing heart. I have committed my life to the Lord. Whatever or wherever He wants me to do or go, I am willing...I do not know where God will lead me,...but I continue to pray about it everyday and where He wants me to serve Him. I will follow anywhere, near or far away."*

## **PAUL TURNS HIS ATTENTION TO GOD'S AUTHORITY STRUCTURE**

**Verses 11-15**, *"Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence. For Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression. Notwithstanding she shall be saved in childbearing, if they continue in faith and charity and holiness with sobriety."*

This is not an easy portion of Scripture to understand. We will look at it by keeping it in its context and by comparing Scripture with Scripture. First Paul said, *"Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection."* **First Corinthians 14:34** says, *"Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak."*

## **KEEPING IT IN CONTEXT**

The context of **First Corinthians 14:34** has to do with speaking in tongues; however, we see the principle is established in both Scriptures concerning the position of women in the local church. The focus is on God's structure of authority. Women should be thankful that they are not responsible concerning leadership in the local church.

**Verse 13**, *"For Adam was first formed, then Eve."*

God could have made the woman first; however, He did not. Genesis 2:20 tells us the woman was made to be *"...an help meet"* for Adam. God's purpose for a woman is to make her husband successful in God's definition of the word successful. Most women have their hands full with that responsibility without being concerned about leadership in the local church.

**Verse 1**, *"And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression."*

## **EVE LISTENED TO THE DEVIL AND ADAM LISTENED TO HIS WIFE**

Eve said, *"The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat."* (Genesis 3:13) Adam was not deceived.

God charged him with listening to the advice of his wife to follow her in her sin. Genesis 3:17 tells us God said to Adam, *"Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life;"*

## **ABRAHAM MADE THE SAME MISTAKE**

In **Genesis 16:2** *"Abram hearkened to the voice of Sarai,"* and the result was the beginning of all the wars in the Middle East to this day. Both Eve and Sarai started out with a great testimony for God and both of them changed.

The men and women in Ephesus also started out with a good testimony, but they changed. Like the Corinthians they ignored Paul when he said, *“But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.”* (Second Corinthians 11:3) The Bible says, *“...the woman being deceived was in the transgression.”*

**Verse 15**, *“Notwithstanding she shall be saved in childbearing, if they continue in faith and charity and holiness with sobriety.”*

## **A TREMENDOUS OPPORTUNITY FOR WOMEN**

The phrase *“...she shall be saved,”* has nothing to do with eternal life. Many times the word saved is used in Scripture referring to being saved physically. For example, in **Acts 27:31** we read, *“Paul said to the centurion and to the soldiers, Except these abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved.”*

## **CHILDBEARING**

The term childbearing relates to the home. Verse fifteen contains the words *“holiness with sobriety.”* The word *“sobriety”* is only found twice in the Word of God. First, in verse nine where it deals with a woman’s modesty and again in verse fifteen where it deals with a mother teaching her children in the home. In **Titus 2:3-6** God again focuses on the home where we read, *“The aged women...as becometh holiness...teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, To be discreet, chaste, keepers at home...”*

We must always keep Bible verses in their context. The context of **First Timothy 2:15** is used in the sense of a woman not having to be involved in leadership in the local church to be successful. Paul focused here on the tremendous and very rewarding responsibility of women teaching their children so that they will *“...continue in faith and charity and holiness with sobriety.”*

**Verse 15**, *“Notwithstanding she shall be saved in childbearing, if they continue in faith and charity and holiness with sobriety.”*

Notice also the word *“notwithstanding”* in verse fifteen. This word means *“in spite of”* and refers to the fact that in spite of being deceived the woman can save herself from a life of defeat as a Christian by teaching her children to *“...continue in faith and charity and holiness with sobriety.”*

**Proverbs 31**, speaking of the virtuous woman says, *“...her price is far above rubies...The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her.”* It says, *“Her children arise up, and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her.”*



*“Who can find a virtuous woman? for her price is far above rubies.”*

(Proverbs 31:10)



# First Timothy Chapter Three

**Verse 1**, *"This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work."*

The phrase, **"This is a true saying,"** is translated from the same Greek words as **First Timothy 1:15** where we read, **"This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief."** Paul saw himself as a sinner who had obtained mercy.

## THE WORD IS FAITHFUL

Paul is drawing special attention to the fact that the Word is *"faithful,"* in that God extended His mercy to even the *"chief of sinners,"* even allowing him to be involved in the Lord's work. He used the same phrase when he wrote to Timothy about the position of a pastor of a local church. Paul said, *"...If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work."*

**Psalm 37:4** says, *"Delight thyself also in the LORD; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart."* This does not mean if we delight ourselves in the Lord, we will get a new car if we desire one. It means that God will put the desires in our heart that He wants there.

None of God's appointed pastors just decide to go into the ministry. The desire must come from God. We read in **Amos 7:14-15** that Amos said, *"Then answered Amos, and said to Amaziah, I was no prophet, neither was I a prophet's son; but I was an herdsman, and a gatherer of sycamore fruit: And the LORD took me as I followed the flock, and the LORD said unto me, Go, prophesy unto my people Israel."*

Concerning Jeremiah, we read in Jeremiah 1:5 that God said, *"Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations."*

## WHY THE DIFFERENT TERMS?

### Elders - Bishops - Pastors

Paul referred to the position of the pastor as *"...the office of a bishop."* The Bible has different terms for leadership that are used *in the context of the local church*. One is *elder* and *elders*. These terms appear *sixty-four times* in the New Testament. Another term is *bishop* and *bishops* which appear *seven times*, and the third term is *pastors* which appears *only one time* in the New Testament. Since the term pastor is only used once concerning the local church age, we would do well to determine why we use that title today.

### The Term Elder

If we use the rule of first mention, we find the word *"elders"* first appears in **Genesis 50:7**, where we read about Pharaoh and *"...the elders of his house, and all the elders of the land of Egypt."* The Bible speaks about *"...the elders of Israel"* in thirty-four verses, and refers to elders in connection with countries such as *Midian, Moab, Gilead, Jabesh*, as well as *towns, cities*, and other places.

## **Elders In The New Testament**

The Bible says in **Matthew 16:21** “...Jesus suffered many things at the hand of the elders.”

- They challenged His authority.
- They planned His crucifixion.
- They sought false witnesses against Him.
- They gave the thirty pieces of silver to Judas.
- They persuaded the release of Barabbas, and the destruction of Jesus.
- They mocked the Lord when He was on the cross.
- They paid money to the soldiers to lie about the resurrection.
- They persecuted the early Christians.
- They were involved in the stoning of Stephen.
- They sent Paul to Damascus to bring Christians back to Jerusalem to be persecuted.
- They put themselves under a curse to kill Paul.
- Peter said in **First Peter 5:1**, “*The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder.*”

## **WHY DO WE FIND ELDERS IN LOCAL CHURCHES IN THE NEW TESTAMENT?**

We read they, “*Ordained them elders in every church*” (Acts 14:23).

## **BEGINNING AT THE BEGINNING**

### **Examining the Term Elder**

In the Book of Acts *thousands* of people in the city of Jerusalem were trusting Christ as their personal Saviour, and local churches were being organised. These churches were to be structured “*decently and in order.*” The Bible says elders were being ordained in “*every church.*”

**The residents of Jerusalem were mainly Jewish, and were all familiar with the term “elder.”** As seen in the Old Testament Scriptures, the elders were leaders of cities, households, countries and Jewish synagogues. The Holy Spirit inspired the writers of the Bible to use the term *elder* in this situation because the Jews would know the responsibilities the elder had in their local churches.

## **USING THE TERM BISHOP IN THE BOOK OF PHILIPPIANS**

The word “*bishop*” is in the New Testament one time, and the plural term, “*bishops*” is found six times. We read of *bishops and deacons* together in Philippians 1:1. We read of the “*office*” of a bishop in **First Timothy 3:1**, as well as the *qualifications* of a bishop in First Timothy chapter three and Titus chapter one. Who are these bishops? **Philippians 1:1** says, “*Paul and Timotheus, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons:*”

## **BISHOPS FOR THE GREEKS**

The recipients of this letter were mainly Greeks. The word *bishop* was a term used by them long before the New Testament was written. When the Greeks or Romans conquered a city or state, the emperor would appoint a bishop to take charge of the area.

## A POSITION OF AUTHORITY

The bishop was a leader with authority, but was also responsible to a superior power. He was a leader who introduced new things. The Holy Spirit inspired the writer of Philippians to use the word “*bishop*” because the people in this environment would know immediately what his responsibilities were in the local church.

## EXAMPLE

We were recently ministering in a mud hut with the Indians in the jungle of Venezuela. The village has a leader who is called a chief. If we called him a captain he would not know what we were talking about. On the other hand, the leader of a football team is a captain, he is not their chief. Paul simply used terms for the leader of the local churches that people understood.



## ELDER AND BISHOP IN THE SAME PLACE

In the book of Titus, the Holy Spirit inspired the writer to use both words in the same paragraph. In **Titus 1:5** we read about ordaining “...*elders in every city.*” Two verses later he said, “...*A bishop must be blameless.*” Obviously the terms are interchangeable, and are referring to the same local church office.

## PAUL AT EPHESUS

In **Acts 20:17** we read, Paul, “*called the elders of the church.*” In verse twenty-eight he referred to them as tending a “*flock.*” He also referred to them as “*overseers.*” We need to keep this in mind as we look at the term “*pastors.*”

## “HE GAVE SOME...PASTORS.”

In **Ephesians 4:11** the Holy Spirit inspired the writer to use the term “*pastors.*” Verse twelve says *pastors* were given “*For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry.*” God designated “*pastors*” for this responsibility. The place God assigned for *perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry* is the local church, as it is “...*the pillar and ground of the truth.*”

## THE SHEPHERD

Although the term “*pastors*” is seen only one time in the King James Version of the New Testament, the Greek word is there eighteen times. The Hebrew word “*pastors*” is in the Old Testament another eight times. The Old Testament word is “*ra`ah.*” The word means “*to shepherd.*” The New Testament word is “*poimen*” and also means “*to shepherd.*”



## EVERYONE UNDERSTOOD THE SHEPHERD’S RESPONSIBILITY

In the New Testament, the word for shepherd refers to *Jesus* nine times. It refers to a *literal shepherd* eight times and once it refers to the leaders God gave as a *gift to the local churches*. People in Israel knew immediately what the local church leader’s responsibilities were when they heard the word shepherd. The term “*pastors*” in **Ephesians 4:11** is obviously used as a type of someone God has chosen to shepherd the sheep.

## SHEPHERDING THE SHEEP IN FIRST PETER

First Peter 5:1-3 says, *"The elders which are among you I exhort, ...Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock."*

### THE GOOD SHEPHERD

*"It's All About The Sheep!"*

- **Feeding** the Lord's lambs (John 21:15-17).
- **Feeding** the Lord's sheep (John 21:15-17).
- **Watering** the Lord's sheep (Genesis 29:3).
- **Leading** the Lord's sheep (Psalm 23:1-6).
- **Protecting** the Lord's sheep (Psalm 23:1-6).
- **Comforting** the Lord's sheep (Psalm 23:1-6).
- **Disciplining** the Lord's sheep (Psalm 23:1-6).



**Some Teach We Must Have More Than One Pastor to Have a Scriptural Church. What Does the Bible Say?**

### PAUL AND BARNABAS PLANTING CHURCHES

Paul and Barnabas established churches in *Antioch, Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe*. **Acts 24:23** says, *"...they ordained them elders (pastors) in every church."* There were *thousands* of people being saved in many other cities. We read in **Acts 15:36**, *"And some days after Paul said unto Barnabas, Let us go again and visit our brethren in every city where we have preached the word of the Lord, and see how they do."*

In **Titus 1:5** we read, *"For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders (pastors) in every city, as I had appointed thee."* There were obviously *many* churches starting which means there would be *many* pastors. It is obvious concerning all these churches, the word to describe the pastors would be plural.

### WHAT ABOUT SMALL CHURCHES?

At least ninety percent of the churches in North America come under the category of a small church. The New Testament often refers to a church in a house. Paul wrote in **Romans 16:5**, *"...greet the church that is in their house."* In **First Corinthians 16:19** he referred to, *"...the church that is in their house."* In **Colossians 4:15** he referred to *"...the church which is in his house."* Also we read in **Philemon 1:2** about *"...the church in thy house."* (Note: The word church in these references is *"ecclesia"* and ALWAYS means an assembly. The *"ecclesia"* was ALWAYS an official organised meeting that met in a place, had a person in charge, and had a lawful purpose) These references do not give licence to people holding meetings in their homes because they can't handle the God-given authority in the local church!



It is interesting to note that when the Holy Spirit inspired Paul to write about the qualifications for the office of the pastor and deacons, he used the *singular* term when referring to the *pastor* and the *plural* term when referring to the *deacons*.



## THE PASTOR

(Note the singular references.)

### First Timothy 3:1-13,

*“This is a true saying, If **a** man desire the office of **a** bishop, **he** desireth **a** good work. **A** bishop then must be blameless, the **husband** of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach; Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous; **One** that ruleth well **his** own house, having **his** children in subjection with all gravity; (For if **a** man know not how to rule **his** own house, how shall **he** take care of the church of God?) Not **a** novice, lest being lifted up with pride **he** fall into the condemnation of the devil. Moreover **he** must have a good report of them which are without; lest **he** fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.”*

## THE DEACONS

(Note the plural references.)

*“Likewise must the **deacons** be grave, not doubletongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre; Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience. And let **these** also first be proved; then let **them** use the office of a deacon, being found blameless. Even so must **their** wives be grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things. Let the **deacons** be the **husbands** of one wife, ruling **their** children and **their** own houses well. For **they** that have used the office of a deacon well purchase to **themselves** a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus.”*

## COMING TO TERMS WITH THE TERMS

### Conclusions:

- The terms *elder/bishop/pastor* are used of the same local New Testament office.
- The Holy Spirit inspired men to *use different terms* understood by those in different areas.
- Pastors are referred to as *ruling* and *teaching*.
- The Greek term bishop indicates the pastor is a *man of authority who is responsible to a higher power*.
- Bishops are referred to as *caring* for the church, *teaching* the Scriptures, and *protecting* the flock, as an *officer* of the local church.
- The *qualifications* for bishops *stress strong leadership*.
- The term *bishop* and *elder* are *used of the same men* in Second Timothy 3:1, 2 and Second Timothy 5:17, 19.
- If the Bible demands a *board of elders* other than pastors, it also demands a *board of bishops*.
- The fact that Jesus is referred to as the “*Chief Shepherd*” indicates the pastor is the under-shepherd in the local church, when taken in the context of the chapter. (First Peter 5:1-5)

### The Ministry involves...

- Teaching believers - (Ephesians. 4:11-16)
- Preaching the Word - (Second Tim. 4:2-4)
- Taking the oversight - (First Peter 5:2)
- Shepherding the flock - (Acts 20:28)
- Ruling/leading well - (First Timothy. 5:17)
- Being an example - (First Peter 5:3)



**If this list is not about pastors, what do pastors do?**

**Verse 2,** “*A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach;*”

## Blameless

All Christians are commanded to be blameless. **Philippians 2:15** says, *"That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world."* The word means, *"To take hold of."* There must be nothing in the pastor's life anyone can take hold of to tear down the ministry or the church.

Even as an unsaved Pharisee, Paul said in **Philippians 3:6** that concerning the law, he was *"...blameless."* In verse ten, we read the deacon must be *"...found blameless."* When writing to Titus, Paul expanded a little concerning being blameless. He said, *"For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God; not selfwilled, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre"* (Titus 1:7).

## The Husband of One Wife

Notice it does not say, the wife of one husband. Women who hold the position of a pastor in this age of apostasy, do so in direct disobedience to the Word of God. It says the pastor must be *"...the husband of one wife."* Concerning marriage, Jesus said, *"And they twain shall be one flesh: so then they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder"* (Mark 10:8-9).

The context of this portion of Scripture has to do with the fact that *"...the Pharisees came to him, and asked him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife? tempting him"* (v.2). In verse four we read, *"Moses suffered to write a bill of divorcement, and to put her away."* We read in verse five, *"And Jesus answered and said unto them, For the hardness of your heart he wrote you this precept."*

Finally, Jesus said, *"What therefore God hath joined together, let not **man** put asunder"* (v.9). **Moses was a man!** Moses made many mistakes. This was one of them. Again, the Bible says, *"What therefore God hath joined together, let not **man** put asunder."*

The subject of divorce and remarriage is a complicated subject; however, a child who is old enough to read, can understand that the Word of God says no man can pastor a church if he has been married, divorced, and remarried if his first wife is still living.

**Vigilant** - The dictionary says vigilant means *"...to keep watch."* The Greek word carries the idea of being *"...Temperate."* **First Peter 5:8** says, *"Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour."* The pastor must have control of his emotions, under the extreme pressures of the position of a pastor.

**Sober** - This does not mean that he cannot have a sense of humour. The truth is, he better have a sense of humour. It means that he does not act in a foolish manner that would cheapen the cause of Christ.

**Of good behavior** - The Greek word translated *"good"* has been translated *"modest"* in **First Timothy 2:9** where we read, *"In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel."* The dictionary says modest is *"Having or proceeding from a reluctance to call attention to oneself."* The Greek word *"kosmos"* means *"well-ordered, becoming,"* and *"dignified."*

**Given to hospitality** - Sincere members in the local church need to know that the pastor will receive them and will reach out to them in Christian love.

**Apt to teach** - The pastor must be a student of the Book, and be able to explain and apply the message of the Book to those who hear him speak. The Greek word also implies that the pastor must be teachable. There are few things more harmful to a local church than a pastor who thinks he knows it all. **It was to the pastor that Paul said**, *"Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth"* (Second Timothy 2:15).

**Not given (to have) to wine** - Barnes Notes On The New Testament reads, *"Not ready to quarrel and offer wrong, as one in wine."* In the previous verse we read the pastor is to be **"...given to hospitality"** and has to do with how he will respond to people. When the Bible says the pastor is not to be given to wine, it also has to do with not responding as one does who is given to wine. One who is given to wine is not in control of his faculties.

**Proverbs 23:31** says, *"Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup, when it moveth itself aright."* There is absolutely no doubt that the Bible teaches that Christians are not to drink fermented wine.

**No striker** - Literally, *"Not looking for a fight."* The pastor is not to be a man looking for battles. If he preaches the Word as commanded, the battles will come and he must *"...earnestly contend for the faith"* (Jude 1:3). Contending for the faith and be contentious are two different things.

**Not greedy of filthy lucre** - **Proverbs 15:27** says, *"He that is greedy of gain troubleth his own house."* The word *"lucre"* means *"to enjoy monetary gain."* The man who is greedy for monetary gain is disqualified from the position of a pastor. **First Timothy 6:10** says, *"For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows."* Ananias and Sapphira were too concerned about money, and it cost them their lives.

It is right and proper for a church to provide for their pastor. **First Timothy 5:17** says, *"Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine."*

Many churches fail to have the blessings God would like to bestow upon them because they do not take care of the pastor financially.

**Patient** - The pastor must be able to remain calm in spite of the opposition and discouraging situations that will come his way. In **Second Corinthians 11:13**, Paul had to deal with *"false apostles and deceitful workers"* who were inside the churches. In verses twenty-three we read he was whipped and put in prison.

In verses 24-27, he said, *"Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness."*

In verse twenty-eight he said, *"Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches."* In verses 32-33 he said the governor had *"...the Damascenes with a garrison, desirous to apprehend me: And through a window*

*in a basket was I let down by the wall, and escaped his hands.”* The pastor must be patient. He must be able to take criticism without responding in anger.

**Not a brawler** - The pastor while contending for the faith must not be confrontational. The Greek literally reads, *“Not disposed to fight.”*

**Not covetous** - The word *covet*, means *to desire what belongs to another*. The first thing we are commanded not to covet is found in **Exodus 20:17**, where it says, *“Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house...”* The list includes *thy neighbour's, wife...manservant...maidservant...ox...ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbour's.”*

**The pastor must not covet what is not his, including a ministry that God has given to another pastor.** One of the greatest mistakes a pastor can make is to focus on the number of people that another pastor has and covet a numerical growth. It is very important for the pastor to realize his main responsibility as a *pastor* is not a numerical growth, but a spiritual growth in the people God has given him.

The pastor must feed the sheep God has given him rather than coveting sheep he does not have. Again, this does not mean as a *Christian* he should not be concerned about leading people to Christ. It means as a *pastor* his first responsibility is to feed the sheep.

**His family** - *“One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?)”* It is the responsibility of the pastor to be in charge of the local church.

The pastor is commanded to *“Feed the flock of God which is among you, **taking the oversight thereof.**”*

**First Peter 5:2** and **First Timothy 5:17** refer to *“...the elders that **rule** well...”* **Hebrews 13:7** says Christians are to *“Remember them which have the **rule** over you.”* **Hebrews 13:17** says, *“Obey them that have the **rule** over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls.”*

If the pastor is not *“One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity,”* he is disqualified from being a pastor. God's Word continues, *“For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?”* In **Ephesians 5:22** God commands, *“Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord.”* If a man has a wife who will not submit to him in his role as the leader in the home or has children who are not in subjection, he is not qualified to pastor a local church.

**Not a novice** - *“new convert.”* A Christian must be thoroughly grounded before he is placed in the pastorate. Verse six says the pastor cannot be *“...a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil.”* In Mark chapter four, Jesus said when the Word is sown *“Satan cometh.”* Concerning the person who is not grounded in the Word Jesus said, they, *“...have no root in themselves, and so endure but for a time: afterward, when affliction or persecution ariseth for the word's sake, immediately they are offended.”*

**Verse 7**, *“Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.”*



The pastor must have a good reputation with the unsaved concerning his morals, his finances, and his honesty. His manner of life must be such as not to bring reproach to the cause of Christ. Satan always has a snare laid in hope of catching the pastor of every church. In **Acts 20:28** it was to the pastor that Paul said, *"Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers."*

Peter held the position of an apostle, and he was later a pastor. It was to Peter that Jesus said, *"...behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat"* (Luke 22:31).

## THE DEACONS

**Verse 8**, *"Likewise must the deacons be grave, not doubletongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre;"*

**Be grave** - To be grave means they must be sober-minded men. They should be men who will inspire respect.  
*doubletongued*

**Not doubletongued** - Not doubletongued literally means not uttering the same thing twice. In other words, the deacon will need to keep quiet about church problems that are discussed between the deacons and the pastor. To be doubletongued also means to be deceitful. The deacon cannot express his loyalty to the pastor and then live deceitfully concerning his promise of support.

**Not given to much wine** - It is not suggesting that the deacon can have a little wine. **Proverbs 23:31** says, *"Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup, when it moveth itself aright."* **Proverbs 20:1** says, *"Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise."* One thing is certain: the deacon will need wisdom in handling his God-given responsibilities. The key word in understanding this command is the word *"given."*

The deacon is not to be given over to the loss of control as one on much wine is given over. Paul used the same analogy in **Ephesians 5:18** where we read, *"And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit;"* He was not saying we could drink wine as long as it wasn't in excess. He was saying wine is the cause of surpassing God's specified limits of control.

He said, *"And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess;"* and in contrast he said we're to be *"...filled with the Spirit;"* To be filled with the Spirit is to be led by the Spirit. **Romans 8:14** says, *"For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God."*

**Not greedy of filthy lucre** - The pastor and the deacons would be handling the funds of the local church. It was important that neither are greedy or guilty of coveting money.

## A VERY IMPORTANT QUALIFICATION

**Verse 9**, *"Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience."*

This is a very important, overlooked, and misunderstood qualification for the position of a deacon. To understand the importance of this verse it is necessary to have an understanding of what is meant by *"...the mystery,"* and it is necessary to have an understanding of what is meant by *"...the faith."*

## THE MYSTERY

When the Word of God reveals a mystery it reveals a sacred secret that was not previously known. For example in **Mark 4:11** Christ said to His disciples, *“Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God: but unto them that are without, all these things are done in parables.”* That secret had to do with the Jews, and only the Jews. I had nothing in common with the secret that was revealed to Paul.

## PAUL’S MYSTERY

In **Romans 16:25** Paul referred to his as “my gospel.” The phrase simply means “good news.” Paul said, *“Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, (my good news) and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began.”*

- In **Ephesians 3:3** Paul’s said, *“...by revelation he (Christ) made known unto me the mystery.”*
- In **Ephesians 3:4** Paul’s desire was that, *“...ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ.”*
- In **Ephesians 3:9** Paul Paul’s ministry was, *“...to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ.”*
- In **Ephesians 6:19** Paul’s desire was, *“...that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery...”*
- In **Colossians 1:26** Paul’s referred to *“...the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints.”*
- In **Colossians 4:3** Paul asked for prayer, *“...that God would open unto us a door of utterance, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in bonds.”*

Referring to the council meeting at Jerusalem where they were trying to figure out how God wanted things done Paul said, *“But of these who seemed to be somewhat...in conference added nothing to me.”* Paul had received this revelation straight from Christ. The men at Jerusalem could argue all day but they had no new information for him. He said, *“For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ”* (Galatians 1:12).

In **First Timothy 3:9** Paul, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit said one of the qualifications for deacons in the local church was, and still is, that they would be, *“Holding (hanging on to) the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience.”*

## “THE FAITH?”

In **First Timothy 4:1** we are told that *“...the latter times some shall depart from **the faith**...”* It is obvious that this is not referring to salvation. It is referring to the system of truth that is held by those who are followers of Christ. The new system of truth that was revealed to Paul was the fact that God’s program was now going to be done in local churches.

## UNDERSTANDING PAUL’S MINISTRY

Immediately after Paul was saved we read in Acts 9:6 *“And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do.”*

## A VERY IMPORTANT TIMELINE

1. **He went to Damascus looking for**, *"...any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem."*
2. **He met Christ**, *"...as he journeyed, he came near Damascus..."*
3. **After he met with Ananias and received his sight and was**, *"...filled with the Holy Ghost..."*
4. **Verse 17 says**, *"...Then was Saul certain days with the disciples which were at Damascus."*
5. **Verse 20 says**, *"...straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God."*
6. **Verse 22 says Saul**, *"...confounded the Jews which dwelt at Damascus, proving that this is very Christ." He continued preaching for, "...many days were fulfilled, the Jews took counsel to kill him."*
7. **Verse 25 tells us**, *"Then the disciples took him by night, and let him down by the wall in a basket."*
8. **He then travelled about 100 miles to Arabia**. *"Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me; but I went into Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus" (Galatians 1:17).*
9. **In Galatians 1:18 we read**, *"Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days."*
10. **Acts 9:26,27 tell us, when Saul came to Jerusalem**, *"...he assayed to join himself to the disciples: but they were all afraid of him, and believed not that he was a disciple. But Barnabas took him, and brought him to the apostles, and declared unto them how he had seen the Lord in the way, and that he had spoken to him, and how he had preached boldly at Damascus in the name of Jesus."*
11. **Acts 9:28,29 tells us**, *"...he was with them coming in and going out at Jerusalem. And he spake boldly in the name of the Lord Jesus, and disputed against the Grecians: but they went about to slay him."*
12. **Paul's life was in danger so the Believers in Jerusalem**, *"...brought him down to Caesarea, and sent him forth to Tarsus."*

We do not know how long he spent in Tarsus. The next we hear of him is in **Acts 11:25** when the local church at Antioch was getting organized, *"Then departed Barnabas to Tarsus, for to seek Saul."* Paul was the only person on earth who knew about the new system of faith we now know as the local church dispensation.

## A NEW DISPENSATION AND A NEW SET OF INSTRUCTIONS:

Paul left Damascus and traveled over 100 miles to the same area where Moses had received instructions for the dispensation of the Law. We read in **Galatians 1:11-12** Paul said, *"But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ."*

How long he was alone with God in Arabia is uncertain. Paul said in **Galatians 1:17**, *"I went into Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus."* Perhaps, like Moses, he was forty days on the mountain receiving instructions.

**Deuteronomy 29:29** says, *"The secret things belong unto the LORD our God:..."* Paul met with Christ and learned one of God's secrets. This secret had to do with the local church dispensation. Paul started at Antioch and then spent the rest of his life revealing *"...how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth" (First Timothy 3:15).*

## THE MYSTERY

**Ephesians 3:3**, *"How that by revelation He (Christ) made known unto me the mystery..."*

**Ephesians 3:4**, *"...ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery..."*

**Ephesians 3:5**, *"Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit;"*

**Ephesians 3:6**, *"That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body..." (Colossians 1:18, "...the body, the church...")*

**Ephesians 3:9**, *"And to make all men (Jews included) see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ:"*

## **DEACONS' QUALIFICATIONS INCLUDED UNDERSTANDING THIS MYSTERY**

**Verse 9**, *"Holding (hanging on to) the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience."*

### **THE MYSTERY WAS THE NEW SYSTEM**

Again, in **First Timothy 3:9** the phrase *"the faith,"* is not referring to salvation. It obviously refers to the system of truth itself rather than faith concerning salvation. The faith (system of truth) has to do with *"...how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth"* (First Timothy 3:15). The pillar and ground of the truth had previously been the Jewish Temple.

When Paul gave this qualification for deacons, it required he was capable of *"Holding the mystery of the faith."* He was saying that the deacon must have a very *"pure"* (no mixture) understanding of the difference between the dispensation of the Law and the new dispensation of the local church.

### **TODAY'S DEACONS MUST UNDERSTAND THE ERROR OF THE UNIVERSAL CHURCH DOGMA**

**First Timothy 4:1** warns us that *"...in the latter times some shall depart from the faith..."* In our day of apostasy, this qualification for deacons requires that they have a clear understanding of the difference between the unscriptural so-called universal church and the local church.

**The universal church virus has been the major promoter of the apostasy we face today.** The deacons needs to have a very clear understanding that God's system for presenting the work of God today is the local church, and only the local church. According to Strong's Concordance *"conscience"* here means *"to understand or become aware, to be conscious or informed of something."*

**Verse 10**, *"And let these also first be proved; then let them use the office of a deacon, being found blameless."*

**First be proved?** - The Greek word means *"to test,"* and it specifically refers to being tested concerning the deacons' ability to *"hold onto"* the truth of the local church.

Every place where Paul established local churches, the Jews followed him in an attempt to convince the new members of local churches that they must go back under the law of Moses, if they were to be truly saved.

**The first four qualifications for deacons were obvious and needed not to be tested.**

- 1) - *"...the deacons be grave."*
- 2) - *"...not doubletongued."*
- 3) - *"...not given to much wine."*
- 4) - *"...not greedy of filthy lucre."*

Unlike the four things listed above, it would not be obvious if the deacon was capable of *"Holding (hanging on to) the mystery of the faith (body of truth concerning the local church) in a pure conscience."* therefore, Paul said, *"And let these also first be proved; then let them use the office of a deacon, being found blameless."* It was very important at the beginning of the local church age that the deacons understood *"the mystery."* It is also very important that pastors and deacons have an understanding of how it pertains to us today. It is not enough for the deacon to say he takes a strong stand against the flood of para-church ministries that have dwarfed the local church. He must be able to Scripturally know why he takes the position he takes. There is MUCH confusion and apostasy reigns because this important teaching has been neglected.



## THE DEACON'S WIFE

**Verse 11**, *“Even so must their wives be grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things.”*

It is noteworthy that qualification for deacons includes that the wives of deacons must be *“...grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things.”* The pastor's wife is not mentioned in this manner; however, verse four says the pastor must be *“One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity;”* If the pastor does not rule his own family well or a deacon's wife is a slanderer and unfaithful in things concerning the ministry, it is very obvious the church will soon be in trouble.

**Verses 12-13**, *“Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well. For they that have used the office of a deacon well purchase to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus.”* The deacons are servants and as servants they have *“...purchase (acquired) to themselves a good degree.”* In **John 13:5** concerning Jesus, we read that *“...he poureth water into a bason, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded.”* God's greatest position for Christians is the position of the servant. In **Philippians 2:7** it says even Christ Himself, *“...took upon him the form of a servant.”*

## A GOOD POSITION

**A good degree** - This phrase refers to a step of advancement in the Christian life. The position of a deacon is referred to as an *“office”* twice in this one chapter. Concerning the pastor, Paul also said, *“This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work.”*

## GOD IS NOT RESPECTER OF PERSONS

There are many different positions of responsibility in life. There are fathers, mothers, husbands, wives, children, kings, governors, pastors, deacons, etc. We know that *“God is no respecter of persons”* (Acts 10:34). We are commanded not to respect one person above another. **James 2:1** says, *“My brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with respect of persons.”*

## GOD IS A RESPECTER OF POSITIONS

The Bible; however, is very clear about our having respect for *positions*. For example, **Ephesians 6:2** says, *“Honour thy father and mother...”* **Romans 13:1** says, *“Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God.”*

- **Mark 3:14**, *“...he **ordained** twelve...”*
- **Acts 14:23**, *“...**ordained** them elders...”*
- **First Timothy 2:7**, *“I am **ordained** a preacher...”*
- **Hebrews 8:3**, *“For every high priest is **ordained** ...”*
- **Titus 1:5**, *“...**ordain** elders in every city.”*
- **Luke 1:8**, *“...the priest's **office**.”*
- **Romans 11:13**, *“...I magnify mine **office**.”*
- **First Timothy 3:1**, *“...the **office** of a bishop.”*
- **First Timothy 3:10**, *“...the **office** of a deacon.”*
- **First Timothy 3:13**, *“...the **office** of a deacon.”*
- **Hebrews 7:5**, *“... the **office** of the priesthood.”*

**Verse 13**, *"For they that have used the office of a deacon well purchase to themselves a good degree, (step to a position) and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus."*

**Verses 14-15**, *"These things write I unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly: But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth."*

## **IT WAS WRITTEN FOR THE PASTOR**

**This is the key verse in First Timothy.** We know the purpose of Paul's writing was that every pastor may know, *"...how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth."* In keeping the things said in this book within their context, it is important to remember that the Book was not directed to the people, it was written for the pastor.

**First Timothy 1:2** begins with the words, *"Unto Timothy."* **Chapter 3:15** is referring to the pastor's behaviour (the manner of conducting oneself) in his position as a pastor. Paul said, *"These things write I unto thee, (Timothy) hoping to come unto thee shortly: But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou (Timothy) oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth."*

**Verse 16**, *"And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory."* As previously stated, the mystery here includes the fact that God was taking the Gospel to the Gentiles by means of the local church which was now to be *"...the pillar and ground of the truth."* **Colossians 1:26** says, *"Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints:"*

## **THE NEW DISPENSATION**

**The mystery of godliness** - In the Old Testament dispensation, the major focus was on God the Father. In the local church age, the focus changes to God the Son. Referring to Christ, we read, *"God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory."*

**Second Peter 1:3** says, *"According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him (Christ) that hath called us to glory and virtue."*

The fact that the good news was now to be *"...preached unto the Gentiles"* was one of the "great" things which constituted the "mystery." During the Old Testament dispensation a wall of partition had divided the Jewish and Gentile worlds. The plan of redemption is now adapted to *"whosoever will."*

**Ephesians 2:13,14** says, *"But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off (Gentiles) are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who hath made both (Jews and Gentiles) one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us;"*

After Christ died on the cross, we read in **Matthew 27:51**, *"And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom."* Now, unlike the times prior to Calvary, we read in Hebrews 4:16, *"Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need."*

# First Timothy Chapter Four

Timothy was commanded to keep the fact of the apostasy before the congregation so that they could guard against the false doctrines and the false philosophies that flood the church when apostasy prevails.

**Timothy was commanded to warn about the characteristics of apostasy and the apostates who promoted it.** As the pastor, he was to guard against being influenced by the promoters of error and publicly expose those who erred. He also had the responsibility to teach the church members about that which is profitable.

**Verse 1,** *“Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, (Body of truth) giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils;”*

A close study of the Bible phrases, *“the latter day, latter days, latter years, latter time,”* and *“latter times”* appear to represent the period beginning with the rebirth of Israel through to the Millennium. The Scriptures give us very explicit events that will happen during this specific time.

## “SOME SHALL DEPART”

One of the major rules of Bible study is to always keep the interpretation of Scripture within its context. Paul’s purpose in writing to the pastor in Ephesus was that he might *“...know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.”* (First Timothy 3:15)



According to Strong’s Concordance the word *“depart”* here not only means *“to remove”* it also carries the idea of *“instigating to revolt.”* As previously mentioned, the words *“the faith”* here have to do with the system by which we do the work of the Lord in the dispensation of the local church.

When Paul said, *“...in the latter times some shall depart from the faith,”* it seems probable he was referring to the departure *from* God’s system of the local church *to* the thousands of para-church ministries that have helped to usher in the apostasy of our day.

## WHEN GOD “SOMES” IT UP

- **“Some”** ...were teaching false doctrine. (First Timothy 1:3)
- **“Some”** ...turned aside unto vain jangling. (First Timothy 1:6)
- **“Some”** ...made shipwreck. (First Timothy 1:19)
- **“Some”** ...departed from the faith. (First Timothy 4:1)
- **“Some”** ...turned aside after Satan. (First Timothy 5:15)
- **“Some”** ...sinned openly. (First Timothy 5:24)
- **“Some”** ...sinned secretly. (First Timothy 5:24)
- **“Some”** ...coveted after money. (First Timothy 6:10)
- **“Some”** ...erred concerning the faith. (Second Timothy 5:24)
- **“Some”** ...had their faith overthrown. (Second Timothy 2:18)
- **“Some”** ...were vessels to honour. (Second Timothy 2:20)
- **“Some”** ...were vessels to dishonour. (Second Timothy 2:20)



Let us never forget to appreciate those who are *“vessels to honour,”* however, when God *“somes”* it up we see the majority of people are not going to listen to a pastor who preaches the Word in this age of apostasy.

## WHERE WILL THEY GO?

Verse three tells us, “...after their own *lusts* (desires) shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.”

They will not accept “*sound doctrine*.” Sound doctrine is doctrine without mixture. This verse speaks of their “*lusts*.” The word simply means their *desires*. The majority of church members in our fundamental Baptist churches “*desire*” to be a member of the church and do nothing.

It is a fact that less than ten percent of the members in fundamental churches do all the work.

Some pastors will allow those who “*desire*” to have no commitment to the work of the Lord to join the local church and feel quite comfortable calling themselves fundamentalists as long as they keep putting their money on the plate each week. **It is any wonder we lose so many young people in our churches.**

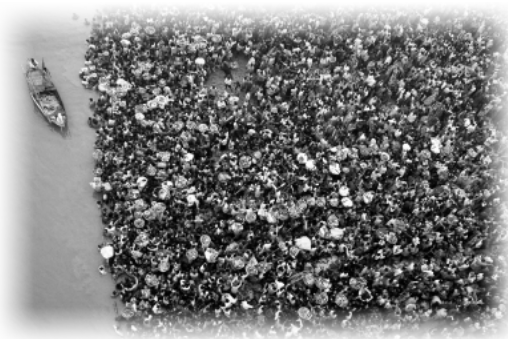
If the pastor deals with the problem of complacency, most complacent members will leave the church. We read, “*They will heap to themselves teachers*.” The word “*heap*” refers to accumulating a large number. The word “*teacher*” here does not mean to preach demanding a decision. The verse goes on to say they will heap these *teachers* to themselves because they have “*itching ears*.” These people go from church to church and from seminar to seminar seeking to hear only those things they *desire* to hear and will not listen to what they do not want to hear.

## THEY COME AND THEY GO

If everyone who has come to our church that I have pastored for the past twenty years, were still with us, we would have well over 300 in attendance today. Most of them loved the preaching, the singing, the KJV, the respect our young people have, the spirit of the meetings, and even the pastor. “...*But they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us.*” (First John 2:19) Not one person who has left over the years has come with a Scripture to support their reason for leaving. **Not one!**

## JESUS HAD A SUCCESSFUL MINISTRY

- **Matthew 4:25**, “...great ***multitudes*** of people.”
- **Matthew 8:1**, “Great ***multitudes*** followed him.”
- **Matthew 12:15**, “Great ***multitudes*** followed...”
- **Matthew 13:2**, “Great ***multitudes*** gathered...”
- **Matthew 15:30**, “Great ***multitudes*** came unto him.”
- **Matthew 19:2**, “Great ***multitudes*** came...”
- **Luke 5:15**, “Great ***multitudes*** came together to hear.”
- **Luke 12:1**, “...an innumerable ***multitude***...”



## THE DAMAGE ONE SERMON CAN DO!

John chapter six begins with “*And a great multitude followed him.*” (Verse 2) Jesus traveled on to Capernaum and we read, “*They also took shipping, and came to Capernaum, seeking for Jesus.*” In verse twenty-eight they asked, “*What shall we do, that we might work the works of God?*” Jesus preached a sermon about what it really meant to follow Him and in verse four we read they, “...*murmured at him.*” **They did not want the truth**, they wanted someone to approve their version of doing the “*works of God.*” In verse sixty-six we read, “*From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him.*” Jesus did not dilute the truth to keep the crowd coming to hear Him. **The ministry of the Lord was no less successful after they left.**



## THE TRUTH ABOUT PARA-CHURCH MINISTRIES

It has only been in recent years that we have forsaken God's local church and organized a flood of ministries outside of the local church. If the *"latter time"* in verse one begins at the time of Israel's rebirth as a nation in 1948, it coincides with the beginning of our days of apostasy.

Before that, for nearly 2000 years, we were content to do things God's way *"...in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth"* (First Timothy 3:15). Not long after the rebirth of Israel in 1948, we began to be flooded with ministries outside of the authority of the local church.

### "THE HOUSE OF GOD"

In **First Timothy 3:15** Paul referred to *"the house of God, which is the church."* It is very obvious that he was not referring to some invisible, universal thing that we have manufactured in recent years. He was talking about the local church, which is the only kind of church mentioned in the Word of God for our present dispensation.

1. **Paul was writing to a pastor.** There are no universal church pastors in the Word of God.
2. **Paul talked about the "office of a bishop."** (pastor) There is no office for any para-church ministries. They are all free to *"do that which is right in their own eyes"* because they have no instructions in the Word of God concerning how to run their ministries.
3. **The pastor is to have his family in subjection because,** *"...if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?"* (Ch.3:5). It is impossible for a pastor to take care of a universal church.
4. **Instructions are given for deacons.** (Ch.3:12,13). There are no deacons in the man-made invisible, so-called universal church, and there are no deacons in Bible colleges or religious newspapers, and the scores of other para-church ministries organized outside of the the local church.
5. **Paul said he was coming to the local church in the town of Ephesus so that they could learn how they should** *"behave...in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth."*

In recent years we have started colleges, newspapers, radio programs, television programs, mission boards, seminars, and now multiple thousands of websites all involved in the responsibilities God gave to the local church, and only the local church!

### ABSOLUTELY NO INSTRUCTIONS

There are absolutely no instructions in the New Testament concerning how **any** ministry outside of the local church should operate. **No instructions! None!**

We have pushed the local church almost out of sight, and the apostasy has flooded in through the thousands upon thousands of para-church ministry of our day. Not all para-church ministries are apostate. Some have a very solid doctrine, however, there is no such thing as a para-church ministry that is founded on the Word of God.

### ARE FRIENDSHIPS MORE IMPORTANT?

Why are fundamental leaders so silent on this important issue? Are relationships with our friends more important than Christ? Twice in one verse, Jesus said those who consider earthly relationships more important than Him are *"not worthy"* of Him. (Matthew 10:37). No Christian who holds earthly friendships above the truth of God's Word is fit to be regarded as a follower of Christ. I didn't say that, Jesus said it!

## A WORD ABOUT DEVILS

Verse one mentions, “...doctrines of devils.” If you ask anyone who has studied the Bible how many devils there are, they will tell you there is only one devil. It is noteworthy that the word “devils” appears **forty-eight times** in the King James Version of the Bible.

I believe that God had His hand on the translation of the King James Bible insofar as it is was translated word for word the way He wanted it translated. Nothing is more disgusting to me than footnotes in the Scofield Bible that suggest a verse he could not understand is, “...not in the better manuscripts.”

If we believe God had His hand on the translation of the King James Version, it is reasonable to ask why is the term “devils” used forty-eight times?

The Jews used the term “devils” in the same sense that we would use the word “demons” today. We read in **Matthew 10:1** that Christ gave His twelve disciples “...power against unclean spirits, to cast them out.” The phrase “unclean spirits” is found ten times in the New Testament, and the phrase “evil spirits” is found four times. In **Matthew 12:24** we read, “But when the Pharisees heard it, they said, This fellow doth not cast out devils, but by Beelzebub the prince of the devils.”

In our age we would say a person is “demon” possessed; however, the word demon or demons is not found one time in the Bible while the phrase “...possessed with devils” is found four times. The word devils as used in the New Testament denoted demons in the Jewish sense, and therefore it is rendered devils.

**Verses 1,2**, “Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; Speaking lies (false doctrine) in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron.”

## CHURCH MEMBERS LISTENING TO WRONG DOCTRINE

Paul warned Timothy that the reason “...some shall depart from **the faith**...” (meaning the system of belief - i.e. the local church. It is impossible to depart from the faith in the sense of our salvation.) happens is because pastors allow people to be “speaking lies” in the local church. Church members in Ephesus were “giving heed” to the false teachers who were supported by “seducing spirits.” This was happening in the church.

## FALSE TEACHERS IN THE CHURCHES

- **Matthew 7:15**, “...false prophets...in sheep's clothing.”
- **Second Peter 2:1**, “...false prophets...among the people.”
- **Second Peter 2:1**, “...false teachers among you.”

We are commanded by God to “...believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God” (First John 4:1).

## THE PROBLEMS AT EPHEBUS

**Verse 3-5**, “Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth. For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving: For it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer.”

These verses are dealing with a particular problem that existed in the local church at Ephesus: the problem that followed Paul from one local church to another and had to do with Jews who constantly worked to bring the Christians back under the law. They were good at “forbidding” and “commanding”; however, Paul said they were “speaking lies in hypocrisy.”

**Verse 6**, *"If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine, whereunto thou hast attained."*

## **"THESE THINGS"**

In **First Timothy 4:6** Paul spoke of promoters of apostasy and seducing spirits, and commanded the pastor to "...put the brethren in remembrance of these things." In verse eleven he again said, *"these things command and teach."* Again, in verse fifteen he commanded the pastor to *"Meditate upon these things...."*

### **In the Book of First Timothy Paul said,**

- **First Timothy 5:7**, *"...these things give in charge..."*
- **First Timothy 5:21**, *"...observe these things..."*
- **First Timothy 6:2**, *"These things teach and exhort."*
- **First Timothy 6:11**, *"...flee these things..."*

## **BEGINNING AND ENDING REMEMBERING THESE THINGS**

It is noteworthy that Paul begins his instructions to the pastor saying, *"...put the brethren in remembrance of these things"* (First Timothy 4:6), and he ends his instructions saying, *"Of these things put them in remembrance"* (Second Timothy 2:14),

### **GOD'S CHURCH MANUAL DOES NOT FOCUS ON GETTING LARGE CROWDS**

Today's promoters of apostasy, and some fundamentalist would have us believe success is found in having large crowds come to hear us preach. Nothing could be further from the truth. The so called mega churches represent only one percent of the people who will be in church next Sunday. That means 99% of the people attending a church next Sunday will be in small churches. A large number of people sitting in a meeting may be a gauge of success for man; however, as God looks at a mega church, He knows how many *"goats"* there are sitting among the *"sheep."*

### **WHAT DO GOATS EAT?**

I recently read there are thirty-two noxious plants found in the state of Montana, and goats eat all thirty-two of them. Goats are effective in controlling weeds because they eat the weeds and leave the grass. Sheep will only eat weeds if that is all that is available. To keep goats coming to these so called successful mega churches, they will need a diet that will satisfy them. **Therefore, the sheep will have to learn to be satisfied with the weeds.**



The watchword for the mega church might be found in **Job 31:40** that says, *"Let thistles grow instead of wheat, and cockle (weeds) instead of barley."*

The Bible does not say if pastors get great crowds, they would be good ministers. The Bible says, *"If thou put the brethren in remembrance of **these things**, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine, whereunto thou hast attained"* (First Timothy 4:6).

### **BACK TO THE BIBLE**

God's church manual does not major on numerical growth. **It focuses far more on spiritual growth, spiritual health, and spiritual strength.** It is God's will that the pastor see that the people are *"...nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine"* (First Timothy 4:6). Proper nourishment comes only as a result of a proper diet.

In **Psalm 119:141** we read the Psalmist wrote, *"I am small and despised: yet do not I forget thy precepts."* It is great to have a multitude in church; however, a crowd has never been God's gauge for success. **Proverbs 15:16** says, *"Better is little with the fear of the LORD than great treasure and trouble therewith."* **Proverbs 16:8** says, *"Better is a little with righteousness than great revenues without right."*

## **A SUCCESSFUL CHURCH CANNOT BE DETERMINED BY SIZE**

A church that has hundreds of people sitting in a room getting their weekly religious fix while remaining spiritual pygmies is not a successful church in God's eyes. God wants people sitting in church who are capable of *"Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers"* (Titus 1:9). God wants pastors to teach the people in his care so that they may become *"faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also"* (Second Timothy 2:2).

## **THE SEVEN PASTORS OF THE REVELATION**

The pastor that received the sharpest rebuke of the seven pastors of the Book of Revelation was the pastor of the church of the Laodiceans. We read in **Revelation 3:17**, that group was *"...rich, and increased with goods."* The one pastor of the seven that received no rebuke from the Saviour was the church at Philadelphia. The Lord highly commended him. In **Revelation 3:8** God said to the pastor, *"I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name."*

The pastor at Laodicea had gathered a crowd, but where was Christ? He said, *"Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me"* (Revelation 3:20).

The door of today's so-called mega churches is open to a mixture of sheep and goats but closed to the Saviour. If we continue letting the goats feel at home in our fundamental churches we will also find the Lord outside inviting individuals to *"...sup with Him."*

## **THERE IS A DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SWELLING AND GROWTH**



You can smack your thumb with a hammer and you will have swelling; however, swelling and growth are two very different things. There is much swelling in the ranks of today's fundamentalism that may be impressing people, but it is not impressing God.

In my lifetime I have watched many of our fundamental churches take the same road as the church at Ephesus took. Below is more information concerning the survey we previously referred to that was taken among *"Young Fundamentalists."*

## **ARE WE GOING TO KEEP PRETENDING THERE IS NO PROBLEM?**

Forty-nine percent of these *"fundamentalists"* who took the survey admitted having drunk alcoholic drinks. (Only nine percent of these *"fundamentalists"* said they no longer drink.)

Seventy-five percent of these professing *"fundamentalists"* do not believe drinking alcoholic beverages is biblically wrong. When I left the evangelical crowd and lined up with the fundamentalists, the evangelicals were not that far gone.



## WE ARE IN SERIOUS TROUBLE

Ten percent of today's "fundamentalists" in the survey felt that women could be pastors or deacons. Sixty-two percent of these professing "fundamentalists" believe fundamentalists have majored on the minors. Forty-eight percent of the so-called "fundamentalists" polled said fundamentalists should not preach standards. Thirteen percent of these "fundamentalists" did not believe Hell was a literal place.

Gone are the days when we could point our fingers at the evangelicals because they were not fundamentalists. **First Peter 4:17** says, *"For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God..."*

**Verse 7**, *"But refuse profane and old wives' fables, and exercise thyself rather unto godliness."*

## UNITY IS ALWAYS THE BYPRODUCT OF AGREEMENT

Verse seven starts with the command to refuse something. One of the pastor's main responsibilities in the ministry includes choosing and refusing things. **The word refuse means** "...to express oneself as unwilling to accept or comply with something." When Moses did that everyone knew where he stood. If you want to be everyone's friend you better get out of the ministry. The pastor has the responsibility to "express" what is acceptable to God and what is not acceptable. **Silence always gives consent!**

The faithful pastor must never seek for unity at the expense of truth. **Amos 3:3** says, *"Can two walk together, except they be agreed?"* Notice it does not say how shall two walk together except they agree. It says, **"be agreed."** Someone has to change his position.

Silence in the face of false doctrine gives consent, it says, *"I agree."* To refuse something is to openly decline to accept another's offer. Moses was offered the kingdom of Egypt; however, *"By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused..."* (Hebrews 11:24).

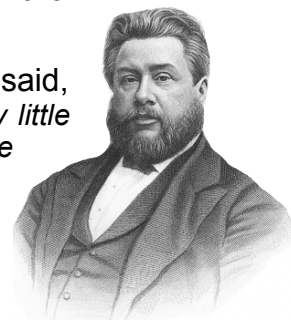
We are commanded to *preserve Scriptural* unity; however, we are never commanded to compromise to *create* it. Bible unity demands the refusal of error in doctrine and in deed. **Unity that is built on truth demands division from error.**

**Titus 1:9-11** speaks of how we are to handle those who are promoters of false doctrine. It says, *"For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers...Whose mouths must be stopped...teaching things which they ought not."*

## THERE IS MORE TO BEING A PASTOR THAN PREACHING THREE TIMES A WEEK

The pastor who will stand true to God's Word in this age of apostasy must be willing to stand for the truth at any cost. The truth of Scripture must be more important than the opinions of the pastor's friends or church members. The pastor must be more concerned about truth than unity of the brethren. The pastor who stands true in our day of apostasy will lose church members; and he will lose the friendship of other pastors.

In 1888 Charles Spurgeon took a strong stand against compromise. He said, *"These who are for peace at any price, who persuade themselves that there is very little wrong...Numbers of good brethren in different ways remain in fellowship with those who are undermining the Gospel; and they talk of their conduct as though it were a loving course which the Lord will approve of in the day of His appearing. We cannot understand them. Complicity with error will take from the best of men the power to enter any successful protest against it. Cost what it may, to separate ourselves from those who separate themselves from the truth of God is not alone our liberty, but our duty."*



Let us again listen to Spurgeon when he said, *“Complicity with error will take from the best of men the power to enter any successful protest against it.”*

## **WHAT ABOUT THE HERESY THAT PROMOTES THAT REPENTANCE IS NOT NECESSARY FOR SALVATION?**

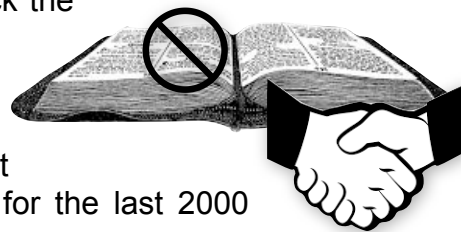
Jesus said in **Luke 13:3**, *“...except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.”* We read in **Second Corinthians 7:9**, *“For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation.”*

**Acts 17:30** says, *“God...commandeth all men every where to repent.”* Repentance has to do with godly sorrow not just a change of mind. The sinner needs to realize he has offended a thrice-holy God and repent of his sin. As mentioned in our introduction, if the “*evangelicals*” had dumped the doctrine of repentance, fundamentalist would have come out against them from coast to coast. When it is our own (Dr. Jack Hyles) said those who hold to the doctrine of repentance are the enemies of soul winning and the editor of one of our fundamental Christian newspapers (Curtis Hudson of The Sword of The Lord) supported him, most fundamentalists did not seem to care.

## **ARE RELATIONSHIPS MORE IMPORTANT THAN TRUTH?**

The *evangelical* leaders of the sixties considered their relationships with each other more important than standing for the truth. To rock the boat would be to lose friends.

Today many fundamental leaders have degraded to the same position. If we believe the doctrine of repentance concerning salvation is being an enemy to soul winning, it means Jesus and all the great men of God who preached for the last 2000 years were wrong, and only Hyles and Hudson got it right.



### **THE NEW PLAN**

*“Let’s not worry about doctrine.  
We must win the world to Jesus.”*

## **DUMPING THE REFERENCE TO REPENTANCE**

**Why** is it that in the 1989 Revised - **Sword of the Lord Hymnbook** - “*Soul-Stirring Songs & Hymns*” that the words to “*The Old Account Was Settled*” are different from the original 1972 edition?

## **ACCORDING TO BIBLE DOCTRINE**

In the first edition the words of the last verse read, “*Oh sinner, seek the Lord, repent of all your sins, For thus He has commanded if you would enter in.*”

## **FALSE DOCTRINE**

In the revised edition the words have been changed to read, “*O sinner, trust the Lord, be cleansed of all your sin, For thus He hath provided for you to enter in.*”

The first edition was Scriptural. Acts 17:30 very plainly says God “...commandeth all men every where to repent.”

The second edition is not only false doctrine it is a “*damnable heresy*,” and somebody connected with the Sword of The Lord changed it on purpose.

- **Why** was it changed from repenting to trusting?
- **Why** are the so-called fundamentalists of our day not concerned about it?
- **Why** is there not an outcry about it?

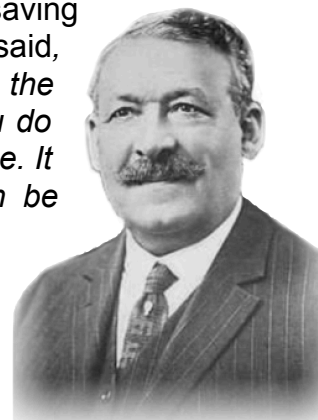
Is it because, like the evangelical before us, our relationships with our friends are more important than preserving the truth?

## **SINK THE BOAT!**

Today if one says anything about the issue he is considered divisive. One fundamental leader recently said to me, *"If you write anything about this you are going to rock the boat."* The truth is we need to do more than rock the boat concerning this false doctrine. We need to sink the boat that says repentance is not necessary for salvation.

## **GIPSY SMITH KNEW THE TRUTH**

Gipsy Smith was used of God to win multitudes of people to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. In his message entitled **"Repent Ye"** he said, *"Repentance is the most neglected doctrine in the New Testament and the most unpopular. People do not like to be called to repentance and you do not often hear it preached. And yet the Bible is a handbook of repentance. It enforces it, commands it, and so demands it that no substitute can be accepted for it."*



He continued, *"Over sixty times the Scriptures enforce it, and all the Epistles are written to show men how to repent."* He said, *"I am afraid that in our zeal to get people into the kingdom or the Church we have lowered the standard. I am afraid that in our zeal to get people into what we call the Church we have been more anxious about heads than hearts. In order to capture, we have compromised and lost. We have been more concerned about filling our Church registers than we have about the kingdom. Jesus said, 'Repent.' John preached repentance. He came to preach it. It had the first place in his sermons. It was first and last with John, 'Repent, repent!' You say it is too startling, sensational, vulgar; but remember, it was God's vulgarity 'Repent.' No man who preaches as John did will be popular. They put John in prison for preaching repentance."*

## **CALVINISM AND REPENTANCE ARE MAJOR ISSUES!**

**Why** are so-called *"fundamentalists"* sticking their heads in the sand acting like the subject of Calvinism and Repentance are not major issues?

Again let us listen to the words of Spurgeon who said, *"We cannot understand them. Complicity with error will take from the best of men the power to enter any successful protest against it. Cost what it may, to separate ourselves from those who separate themselves from the truth of God is not alone our liberty, but our duty."*

(**Note:** For those who would consider us inconsistent quoting Spurgeon when he is considered a Calvinist, it is very obvious he did not believe all that Calvinists believe. He was criticized by Calvinists and even labeled Armenian for his sermon entitled, *"Compel Them to Come In."* Spurgeon said to his critics, *"My Master set His seal on that message. I never preached a sermon by which so many souls were won to God...If it be thought an evil thing to bid sinners to lay hold of eternal life, I will be more evil in this respect and herein imitate my Lord and His apostles."* (See our article available free on our website - **"Calvinism - None Dare Call It Heresy"** to see at least fifteen messages proving that Spurgeon did not really believe in Calvin's Calvinism.)

**Jude 1:3** says, *"Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints."*

## WHAT HAPPENED TO THE DOCTRINE OF SEPARATION?

How is it that today's fundamental leaders will separate from those who have weak standards of music and yet look the other way when heresy is preached? How is it if a Christian leader has hair touching his ears or his collar we will have no fellowship with him, however, if he cuts his hair the way we think he should, it is right to fellowship with him even though he promotes the damnable heresy that repentance is not necessary for salvation?

**Verse 8**, *"For bodily exercise profiteth little: but godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come."*

## THE PHYSICAL AND THE SPIRITUAL

Many of the new converts in the church at Ephesus gave great attention to bodily training. Even today the remains of the stadium can be seen where the athletes displayed their skill for the Grecian Games. No doubt Timothy would have his problems with new converts having the pull of the old life in this area. Today we also have the world pulling the new converts back into the desires of the old way.

**Calvary was more than a ticket to Heaven.** It offers the privilege of a life of "...joy unspeakable and full of glory" (First Peter 1:8). while living here on earth. Verse eight says, "...godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come."

**Verse 9**, *"This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation."*

Paul used the same phrase in **First Timothy 1:15** *"This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners."* The focus in First Timothy is always on Christ. He is mentioned by one name or another over sixty times in only six chapters.

**Verse 10**, *"For therefore (that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners) we both labour and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, specially of those that believe."*

When we read the word *"believe"* in the Bible, we make a mistake if we always assume it has something to do with being saved. When the Bible talks about someone believing something we must always keep it within its context.

**JARIUS'S DAUGHTER** - When Jarius's daughter was raised to life, they were not talking about salvation. In **Mark 5:36** we read "...Jesus...saith unto the ruler of the synagogue, Be not afraid, only **believe**."

**A BLIND MAN** - When the blind man received his sight, they were not talking about salvation. (Matthew 9:28) *"...Believe ye that I am able to do this?"*

**A DEMON POSSESSED CHILD** - When the demon possessed child was delivered, they were not talking about salvation. **Mark 9:23** says, *"...If thou canst **believe**, all things are possible to him that believeth."*

**THE NOBLEMAN'S SON** - When the nobleman's son was healed they were not talking about salvation. **John 4:50** says *"...Go thy way; thy son liveth. And the man **believed** the word that Jesus had spoken unto him, and he went his way."*

Nothing is recorded in these verses about people believing in the sense of being saved. To force that into these verses would be to take them out of their context.

## THOSE WHO BELIEVED WHAT?

In verse ten when Paul referred to *"...those that believe,"* he was referring to the message he had for the Christians at Ephesus. Then, like our age of apostasy, many believers did not



believe everything the pastor preached in spite of the fact it was supported by the Scriptures. We are living in an age when many who call themselves fundamental Christians act like God is operating a cafeteria-style religion where they can take what they like and leave what they don't like.

**Verse 10**, *"For therefore we both labour and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, specially of those that believe."*

There are several applications we can make concerning this verse. First, we must never have our own interpretation of what Bible words mean. When we see the word saved it is not always talking about being saved so as to go to Heaven. **Second Samuel 22:3** says, *"...thou savest me from violence."* **Second Kings 13:5** speaks of being saved from, *"... the Syrians."* **Jeremiah 14:8** refers to being saved *"...in time of trouble."*

## **COMMANDING AND TEACHING**

**Verse 11**, *"These things command and teach."*

The Bible says in **Second Timothy 4:3** *"For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears;"* In our age of fundamental Baptist apostasy, people leave preachers that preach about Bible commands and flock to the teachers who make no demands.

## **MAN HATES LAW ENFORCERS**

When apostasy reigns in the world, as it does today, people have no respect for those who enforce the law. They have little problem with those who make the laws. For the most part they do not even know who made them; however, they despise the one who enforces the law. They continually badmouth police officers; and then when they need help, they call on them for help.

**The same thing is true in our churches.** People do not have a problem with the fact that God has standards in the Bible. Their problem rests with the pastor who dares to attempt to enforce those standards in the local church.

In **John 15:14** Jesus said, *"Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you."* Christians gather in a worship service and sing, *"What a Friend We Have In Jesus."* They even add their hearty amen to **James 4:7** that says, *"Submit yourselves therefore to God."* Everything is fine until the pastor attempts to enforce God's law. The religious hypocrites did not hate Jesus for healing their sick. They hated Him because He expected them to obey the truth presented in the Scriptures.

## **SUBMITTING TO THE LAW ENFORCER**

To the pastor, the Bible says in verse eleven, *"These things command."* In **Hebrews 13:17**, the One who made the laws says the church member is to submit to the law enforcer. The Book God wrote with all His Laws says, *"Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you."* A large percentage of fundamental Independent Baptist church members have little or no respect for God's law enforcers.

**Verse 12**, *"Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity."*

To despise his youth would be to look down on him with contempt because he is young.

In **Titus 2:15** we read, *“These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee.”* In this portion there is no reference to Titus being young. In spite of the lack of respect, the pastor is commanded to *“...be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.”*

**Verse 13**, *“Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine.”*

## **LEARNING FROM GOD’S CHURCH MANUAL**

I remember hearing Jerry Falwell say he was not going to major on doctrine anymore because it was too divisive. You don’t have to be too bright to see where that decision took his church. It will do the same for you if you disobey verse thirteen because you want to buddy-up with some friends who promote error.

The pastor who wants to lead God’s people according to Scripture will need to learn how to do it. The only completely reliable source of instruction for God’s church is found in God’s Book. The Bible is the only Book that will enable the pastor to faithfully be teaching God’s people God’s will, and God’s way of doing His will.

Paul commended those in **Acts 17:11** who, *“...searched the scriptures daily, whether those things (that Paul said) were so.”* If they searched the Scriptures to see if Paul was telling the truth, **how much more should you search the Scriptures to see if the material you are reading now is scriptural?**

The Holy Spirit is always in total harmony with the Word of God. Jesus said in John 16:13, *“Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth.”* **In our age of fundamental apostasy, many local churches are thriving numerically, on half-truths.** Unfortunately numerical growth can give people a false impression of success. We may impress ourselves, however, the half-truth Baptist pastor is not impressing God.

**Verse 14**, *“Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery.”*

In Paul’s day it was common to lay hands on someone when imparting a blessing, or in setting apart to any office. (See Matthew 19:15; Mark 6:5; Luke 4:40; 13:13; Leviticus 8:14; Numbers 27:23; Acts 28:8; 6:6; 8:17; 13:3.) Timothy was set apart to the office of the pastor by the presbytery, which means an assembly of aged men who were a council of pastors.

**We read in Acts 13:2-3**, *“As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away.”*

**Verse 15**, *“Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all.”* To meditate means to *“revolve in the mind.”* Paul said to *“Meditate upon these things.”*

## **WHAT THINGS?**

The phrase *“these things”* is found in First Timothy eight times.

- In **Chapter 3:14**, *“...these things”* deal with the qualifications for deacons.
- In **Chapter 4:6**, *“...these things”* deal with seducing spirits and Christians forsaking the local church as they follow false teachings.
- In **Chapter 4:11**, *“...these things”* deal with Christians who will determine to follow the Word of God in an age of apostasy suffering reproach.
- In **Chapter 4:15**, *“...these things”* deal with people despising the pastor, and how he should handle it.
- In **Chapter 5:7**, *“...these things”* deal with instructions concerning family situations.
- In **Chapter 5:21**, *“...these things”* deal with more the pastor’s finances and rebuking sinners.
- In **Chapter 6:2**, *“...these things”* deal with instructions concerning leading and following.
- In **Chapter 6:11**, *“...these things”* deal with loving money.

## LEARNING THE TRICKS OF THE TRADE

Today's modern church manuals have little in common with God's church manual as found in First Timothy. We have adapted a business mentality and have learned the tricks of the trade in building and organizing while ignoring the basic commands in God's Church Manual. We have managed to build large well-organized groups of people. We have even convinced ourselves that we are successful.

## WHERE IS THE LORD?

With all the activities in the average church service it is difficult to hear the Lord saying, *"Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me."* (Revelation 3:20) Having a large well-organized crowd sitting in a service going through an *"order of service"* while Christ is standing outside knocking at the door is far from success.

God is not the Author of confusion. Organization is very important to God, however, it is possible to have so much order in the service the Holy Spirit can't get involved because He is not welcome to mess up our *"Order of Service."*

**Verse 16**, *"Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee."*

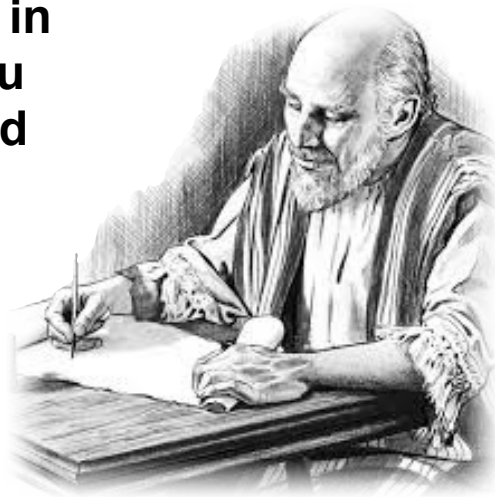
## PAUL WAS TALKING TO THE PASTOR!

In **Acts 20:28** it was to the leadership in this church that Paul said, *"Take heed therefore unto yourselves..."* They failed to listen to his warning. Now again, Paul tells the pastor to *"Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them."*

- In **First Timothy 2:15** Paul commanded the **pastor** to *"...continue in faith and charity and holiness with sobriety."*
- In **First Timothy 4:16** he commanded the **pastor** to *"Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them."*
- In **Second Timothy 3:14** he commanded the **pastor** to *"...continue thou in the things which thou hast learned..."*

**"Take heed unto thyself, and  
unto the doctrine; continue in  
them: for in doing this thou  
shalt both save thyself, and  
them that hear thee."**

(First Timothy 4:16)



## SAVE THYSELF?

Again, it is very important when studying Scripture that we do not jump to preconceived definitions of Bible words. The word “saved” in the Bible is not always talking about going to Heaven. If every Christian had this figured out, it would be the end of Calvinism and many other “isms.”

**Acts 2:40** when Peter said, “...*Save yourselves from this untoward generation.*” It had nothing to do with the salvation of the soul. When Jeremiah 30:7 speaks of the tribulation, it says Israel, “...*shall be saved out of it.*” Concerning the birth of Christ, Luke said in 1:71-73, “*That we (Israel) should be saved from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us.*”

Below is a list of only a few of the places in Scripture where being saved has nothing to do with going to Heaven.

- **Numbers 10:9**, “...*saved from your enemies.*”
- **Second Samuel 22:4**, “...*saved from mine enemies.*”
- **Psalms 18:3**, “...*saved from mine enemies.*”
- **Psalms 44:7**, “...*thou hast saved us from our enemies.*”
- **First Samuel 4:3**, “...*Save us out of the hand of our enemies.*”
- **First Samuel 7:8**, “... *Save us out of the hand of the Philistines.*”
- **First Chronicles 16:35**, “*Save us...from the heathen.*”
- **Psalms 106:47**, “*Save us, ...from among the heathen.*”
- **Second Samuel 19:9**, “...*saved us out of the hand of our enemies.*”
- **Nehemiah 9:27**, “...*saved out of the hand of their enemies.*”

## FALLING INTO THE SWAMP OF APOSTASY

The book of Jude deals with living in the age of apostasy. In Jude 1:24 he said, “*Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy.*”

**Jude was not talking about losing our salvation.** He was talking about falling into the swamp of apostasy that is flooding into our churches today.

In **First Timothy 4:16** when Paul told the pastor to take heed to himself and continue in the doctrine that he would “...*both save thyself, and them that hear thee,*” he was talking about being saved from the apostasy that prevailed in Ephesus. Pastors must also take heed today, as the enemy comes in to our churches like a flood, that he and the people God will hold him responsible for do not fall into today’s fundamental cesspool of apostasy.

**How do we keep the flood of apostasy from flowing into our churches?** Verse eleven says, “*command and teach...these things*” Verse thirteen says we are to, “...*give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine.*” Verse fifteen says, “*Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all.*” Verse sixteen warns, “*Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee.*”

# First Timothy Chapter Five

Verse 1, “Rebuke not an elder, but intreat him as a father; and the younger men as brethren;”

## “REBUKE” - “REBUKE NOT”

Timothy had some very serious issues that needed to be corrected.

- First Timothy 1:3, “...charge some that they teach no other doctrine.”
- First Timothy 1:6, “some...vain jangling.”
- First Timothy 1:7, “Desiring to be teachers of the law; understanding neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm.”
- First Timothy 1:19, “some...made shipwreck.”
- First Timothy 4:1, “some...giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils.”
- First Timothy 4:2, “Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron.”
- Second Timothy 5:24, “...erred concerning the faith.”
- Second Timothy 2:20, “...vessels to dishonour...”
- First Timothy 1:20, “Hymenaeus and Alexander”
- Second Timothy 2:17, “Hymenaeus and Philetus”

Paul had already instructed Timothy saying, “Let no man despise thy youth” (First Timothy 4:12). The pastor was a young man, and it is probable that most of the people in the church who were causing problems were older than he was. Under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, Paul instructed the pastor concerning when, where, and how to rebuke.

- “Rebuke not an elder...” (First Timothy 5:1).
- “...rebuke before all...” (First Timothy 5:20).
- “...rebuke...” (Second Timothy 4:2).
- “...rebuke them sharply...” (Titus 1:13).
- “...rebuke with all authority.” (Titus 2:15).

To understand all these verses, a careful word study is necessary. Several different Greek words are used in these verses. When Paul commanded the pastor saying, “...rebuke not an elder,” he was not saying if Hymenaeus was older than Timothy, that Timothy was to look the other way concerning his sin. When Paul said, “Let no man despise thy youth” He added, “but be thou an example of the believers, in word....”

## SOUND WORDS & MALICIOUS WORDS

- Second Timothy 1:13, “sound words...and love...”
- Second Timothy 2:14, “...words to no profit, but to the subverting of the hearers.”
- Second Timothy 4:14,15, “Alexander...greatly withstood our words.”
- Second Timothy 2:17, “...their word will eat as doth a canker: of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus.”
- First John 1:10, “Diotrephes...prating against us with malicious words...”
- Second Peter 2:3, “...with feigned words make merchandise of you...”
- Second Peter 2:18, “For when they speak great swelling words of vanity...”

## THEIR MOUTHS MUST BE STOPPED

Paul referred to “...many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers.” He continued saying, “...Whose mouths must be stopped” (Titus 1:10-11). It matters not if the troublemaker is sixteen or sixty; if he or she is a “vain talker,” they must be dealt with. **Job 32:9** says, “Great men are not always wise: neither do the aged understand judgment.”



## REBUKING AN ELDER

Our modern day term for rebuke has to do with scolding, or chastising someone. In verse one when Paul said, *"Rebuke not an elder,"* the word the Holy Spirit inspired Paul to use is *"epiplhssw."* It is used only in this one time in all the Word of God, and has to do with being disrespectful.

**God is no respecter of persons, however, He is a respecter of office, relationship, rank, and age.** If Timothy's father was in his congregation, Timothy would be under the command of God to *"honour"* his father, and he would also have the God-given responsibility to deal with his father, if he was guilty of, *"words...to the subverting of the hearers."* However, he must always deal with him, and all aged men in the congregation, *"...as a father."*

## THE FAMILY OF GOD

Paul continued, *"And the younger men as brethren."* Paul used the analogy of a family situation. When someone in our earthly family causes trouble, the father has a responsibility to deal with that person.

When someone in the family of God causes trouble, it is important to remember that even if he must be disciplined out of the church and we must *"...note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed,"* The Word of God commands us to, *"...count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother"* (Second Thessalonians 3:15).

## THE FAMILY ANALOGY CONTINUES

**Verses 2-5** - *"The elder women as mothers; the younger as sisters, with all purity. Honour widows that are widows indeed. But if any widow have children or nephews, let them learn first to shew piety at home, and to requite their parents: for that is good and acceptable before God. Now she that is a widow indeed, and desolate, trusteth in God, and continueth in supplications and prayers night and day."* Pastors must always remember when dealing with problems and Christians who cause them that we are dealing with the family of God.

## WHEN AND WHERE TO REBUKE

We want to emphasize again that the first instruction concerning rebuking in a local church context is found in verse one where it says, *"rebuke (disrespect) not an elder."* All rebuking needs to be done in the spirit of respect and love. Jesus said, *"As many as I love, I rebuke."* (Revelation 3:19)

In the verses that follow Paul refers to situations that should be taken care of privately rather than from the pulpit. In First Thessalonians 2:7 Paul said, *"...we were gentle among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children."* A nurse does not get on the P.A. system in the hospital every Sunday morning and yell at the patients because they are not healthy.

## REBUKE BEFORE ALL?

In this chapter, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit Paul wrote, *"Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear"* (Verse 20). The key to understanding this seeming contradiction is understanding the words, *"Them that sin."* The New Testament uses four different Greek words that are all translated *"sin"* in our King James Bible.

### The Verb:

- "hamartano" = to miss the mark or do wrong.

### The Noun:

- "harmartia" = referring to a thought, word or deed.
- "harmartema" = referring to a specific sin.
- "paratoma" = falling aside, from truth.

The word used in verse twenty is "*harmartema*," pointing to the specific sin mentioned in the context of the verse. The sin has to do with someone bringing an "*accusation*" against the pastor. This is not a light thing with God. In **Second Timothy 4:2** Paul again used the word "*rebuke*." This time it was again to be done publicly and refers to exposing the apostasy of the last days.

## **TIMOTHY'S PROBLEM WITH WIDOWS**

**Verse 6**, "*But she (widow) that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth.*" The context of this verse refers to widows that were living "*in pleasure*," as compared with those who, "*trusteth in God, and continueth in supplications and prayers night and day.*"

Living in pleasure here means to yield to pampering the appetites of the flesh. The widows Paul is referring to here are revealed in verse fifteen where we read, "*For some are already turned aside after Satan.*"

**Verses 8-12**, "*And these things give in charge, that they (widows) may be blameless. But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel. Let not a widow be taken into the number under threescore years old, having been the wife of one man, Well reported of for good works; if she have brought up children, if she have lodged strangers, if she have washed the saints' feet, if she have relieved the afflicted, if she have diligently followed every good work. But the younger widows refuse: for when they have begun to wax wanton against Christ, they will marry; Having damnation, because they have cast off their first faith.*"

Paul was dealing with a situation that was unique to the church at Ephesus, concerning family relationships regarding widows. This is something that most pastors will not have to deal with today; however, the principle is that circumstances that come along in the local church must be taken care of quickly.

**Verses 13-16**, "*And withal they learn to be idle, wandering about from house to house; and not only idle, but tattlers also and busybodies, speaking things which they ought not. I will therefore that the younger women marry, bear children, guide the house, give none occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully. For some are already turned aside after Satan. If any man or woman that believeth have widows, let them relieve them, and let not the church be charged; that it may relieve them that are widows indeed.*"

Paul was writing churches that were facing persecution. Many men had been martyred for their faith leaving many widows, and their children in the churches. The responsibility lay at the feet of their families to take care of these widows whenever it was possible. It is with this focus, Paul wrote the following verses. Verse sixteen says, "*...if any man or woman that believeth have widows, let them relieve them, and let not the church be charged, that it may relieve them that are widows indeed.*" Timothy had an issue concerning the duty of children for their widowed mothers, as well as the proper duty of those who are widows. He was commanded to "*...these things give in charge, that they may be blameless.*"

## PAYING THE PASTOR

**Verse 17**, *“Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine. For the scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. And, The labourer is worthy of his reward.”*

The subject here has to do with how the church is to take care of the pastor in the area of finances. Paul now turns his attention to *“...the elders (pastors) that rule well.”* It should be the pastor’s goal to hear, *“Well done, thou good and faithful servant...”* (Matthew 25:21). when the pastor gives an account to God for the ministry He has entrusted to his care.

## DOUBLE THE MONEY

The pastor must be *“One that ruleth well his own house...”* (First Timothy 3:4). and he must *“rule well”* concerning things in the local church that God has given him the responsibility for. The Word of God also says the pastors that, *“rule well”* are to be *“...counted worthy of double honour.”* Paul continued saying, *“...especially they who labour in the word and doctrine.”* It does not say especially those who bring in a large crowd or have a great public speaking ability.

## SOME GROCERIES FOR THE PASTOR?

**Verse 18** continues, *“For the scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. And, The labourer is worthy of his reward.”*

God said the ox that labours, must be taken care of; therefore, how much more should the pastor be taken care of?

Some years ago I was filling the pulpit for a pastor who was away. During the announcements the man who gave the announcements announced that they were going to get some groceries together to give to their pastor. The church was filled with people who were making an average income; however, they were treating their pastor like a welfare recipient. When I got up to speak I said, don't buy your pastor some groceries, buy him a grocery store. It is not surprising that I was never invited back to preach there. It is also not surprising that independent fundamental Baptist churches ceased to exist shortly thereafter. God will not bless a church that does not take care of the pastor financially.



Concerning this subject, Paul said in First Corinthians 9:7-10, *“Who goeth a warfare any time at his own charges? who planteth a vineyard, and eateth not of the fruit thereof? or who feedeth a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock? Say I these things as a man? or saith not the law the same also? For it is written in the law of Moses, Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn. Doth God take care for oxen? Or saith he it altogether for our sakes? For our sakes, no doubt, this is written: that he that ploweth should plow in hope; and that he that thresheth in hope should be partaker of his hope.”*

## ACCUSATIONS AGAINST THE PASTOR

**Verse 19**, *“Against an elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses.”*

The term *“elder”* is used nine times in the New Testament, and the term *“elders”* is found in sixty-seven verses. Sometimes the word refers to a *person*, and other times it refers to a *position*.

- **Luke 15:25** speaks of the *“elder son.”*
- **Romans 9: 12** says, *“The elder shall serve the younger.”*
- **First Peter 5:5** says, *“...younger, submit yourselves unto the elder.”*

Most of the time the term "elder" as used in the New Testament refers to a position in the Temple or the local church; however, the term "elder" is used in verse one of this chapter referring to a man who is aged. It says, *"Rebuke not an elder, but intreat him as a father."* It is used in verse two concerning *"elder women."* The context makes it plain that the word here refers to men or women who are older.

## THE CONTEXT OF VERSE NINETEEN

In verse nineteen we read, *"Against an elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses."* In verse seventeen the subject has obviously changed to the position of a pastor rather than a person of age. Verse eighteen speaks of the financial support concerning the one who holds the position of a pastor. Immediately following that the word elder is used again, and obviously refers to the pastor.

It is very important when interpreting Scriptures to keep everything in its context. **Paul is not giving instructions to the congregation.** No church member is commissioned by God to receive accusations against a pastor! If there is a time when a pastor does things contrary to the Word of God the Bible plainly commands, *"In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established"* (Second Corinthians 13:1).

## HANDLE THE PROBLEMS SCRIPTURALLY

God has always been concerned that problems like these be handled; however, they must be handled according to Scripture. In **Hebrews 10:28** we read, *"He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses:"*

In **Matthew 18:15-17** Christ commanded, *"Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church..."*

Concerning the troubles that plagued the local church in Ephesus, the Bible says in First Timothy 5:19, *"Against an elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses."* The context is obviously to do with an accusation against a pastor; however, the principle holds true concerning an accusation against anyone in the local church.

**Verse 20,** *"Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear."*

The only person God has given the unpleasant responsibility of rebuking anyone publicly is the pastor. Christians need to learn their God-given responsibilities, and never take responsibilities that are not given to them by God. We read in **Second Timothy 4:2** the pastor is to, *"...reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine."*

## WHAT SIN IS HE REFERRING TO?

He has just mentioned those who bring an accusation against the pastor without, *"...two or three witnesses,"* need to be rebuked *"...before all, that others also may fear."* As previously mentioned, God does not take this sin lightly.

As seen in verse one, the rebuking is to be done without showing disrespect, and it is to be done with, *"all longsuffering."* The words *"all longsuffering"* emphasizes the greatest possible amount, and the best possible quality of patience towards those who are in need of rebuking.

**Verse 21**, *"I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels, that thou observe these things without preferring one before another, doing nothing by partiality."*

**Acts 10:34** says, *"...God is no respecter of persons."* God does not have one set of rules for the rich family that supports the work and another set for the dysfunctional family that gives nothing. The pastor must be very careful when rebuking that he does *"...nothing by partiality."* One of the most important things for a Christian to learn is to learn his responsibilities. A Christian should never take responsibilities that are not God-given responsibilities.

## **LAY HANDS?**

**Verse 22**, *"Lay hands suddenly on no man, neither be partaker of other men's sins: keep thyself pure."*

Again, we cannot overemphasize the importance of keeping all Scriptures in their context. The first mention of the phrase *"lay hands"* is found in Nehemiah 13:21, where Nehemiah was talking about a physical confrontation. He said, *"...I will lay hands on you."* In Nehemiah 13:25 Nehemiah said, *"And I contended with them, and cursed them, and smote certain of them, and plucked off their hair..."*

In the New Testament we read the phrase *"lay hands"* in many verses. The following is a list of verses that have nothing to do with an ordination service.

- **Matthew 21:46**, *"...they sought to lay hands on him..."*
- **Luke 20:19**, *"...same hour sought to lay hands on him..."*
- **Matthew 18:28**, *"...he laid hands on him, and took him by the throat..."*
- **Matthew 26:50**, *"Then came they, and laid hands on Jesus, and took him."*
- **Mark 14:46**, *"...they laid their hands on him..."*
- **John 7:30**, *"...no man laid hands on him..."*
- **John 7:44**, *"...no man laid hands on him."*
- **John 8:20**, *"...no man laid hands on him; for his hour was not yet come."*
- **Acts 4:3**, *"...they laid hands on them, and put them in hold..."*
- **Acts 21:27**, *"...the Jews ...laid hands on him..."*

## **THE CONTEXT OF CHAPTER FIVE**

The context of the term *"lay hands on"* in chapter five has to do with someone bringing an accusation against the pastor. The pastor's responsibility is to *"rebuke them."* He is to *"rebuke before all."* Obviously, as in the many examples where the laying on of hands is mentioned, emotions are running high. It is in this context that Paul said, *"Lay hands suddenly on no man..."*

It is unlikely that this verse has anything to do with ordaining someone to the ministry. Why would God bring that subject up in the middle of a totally different subject? *Maybe* it speaks of the pastor keeping his cool when in emotional situations in the local church. This interpretation would certainly be in context with the rest of the verse that says, *"...neither be partaker of other men's sins: keep thyself pure."* Strong's Concordance says the word *"pure"* here means, *"pure from carnality."* A pastor beating someone with his hands would certainly indicate carnality on his part.

**Verse 23**, *"Drink no longer water, but use a little wine for thy stomach's sake and thine often infirmities."*

It is a medical fact that many diseases are caused by stress. It is also a fact that the office of a pastor includes a great amount of stress.



The phrase *"drink no longer water"* is equivalent to *"drink not water only."* Paul adds, *"For thy stomach's sake."* It was for a medicinal purpose. It was not so Timothy could forget his pressures. Paul mentioned his *"often infirmities."* (Weaknesses or sicknesses.) The use of wine, and of all intoxicating drinks, is forbidden in the Scriptures. Proverbs 23:31 says, *"Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup, when it moveth itself aright."* One thing that is very obvious from this portion of Scripture is the fact that Timothy was holding to that command.

If, and I stress **if**, (which I seriously doubt) Paul was saying Timothy should use wine that is fermented, he is saying, *"drink not water only but mix it with wine"* to dilute it, rendering it to be unfermented, and yet helping his stomach problems. In Paul's day, several techniques were practiced to prevent or delay the fermentation process. For example, boiling grape juice prevented fermentation. Scholars say that it varied from one part wine and four parts water, to one part wine and twenty parts water. A careful study of the Scriptures will show that the Bible speaks of fermented wine and unfermented wine and the Bible says not to drink *"wine,"* if it is alcoholic.

**Verses 24,25,** *"Some men's sins are open beforehand, going before to judgment; and some men they follow after. Likewise also the good works of some are manifest beforehand; and they that are otherwise cannot be hid."*

## **TWO GROUPS IN THE LOCAL CHURCH**

The pastor is reminded of the two groups of people that are in every local church. The first group mentioned are troublemakers. Some people in this group openly cause problems and usually get some to, *"follow after"* them. Paul continued, *"Likewise also the good works of some are manifest beforehand; and they that are otherwise cannot be hid."* The Bible says, *"For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them"* (Ephesians 2:10).

Paul had just referred to widows who were *"...well reported of for good works..."* He continued, *"...if she have diligently followed every good work"* (Verses 9-10).

In **First Timothy 6:18** Paul said, *"That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate,"* Again in Second Timothy 3:16-17, Paul referred to the Scripture being profitable that, *"...the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."*

# **First Timothy Chapter Six**

**Verse 1,** *"Let as many servants as are under the yoke count their own masters worthy of all honour, that the name of God and his doctrine be not blasphemed."*

Some believe as many as fifty percent of the people in the Roman Empire were slaves. Many of them in Ephesus responded to the Gospel and became members of the local church. While the problem of slavery existed in society, it had no place in the local church. **Galatians 3:27, 28** says, *"For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus."* Paul did not endorse slavery, however, some new converts to Christianity obviously felt they could rebel against their owners.



## UNDER THE YOKE OF JUDGMENT

The word yoke is mentioned fourteen times in Jeremiah. In **Jeremiah 28:14**, we read God put “...a yoke of iron” upon His people because they refused to obey Him. The phrase “under the yoke” is found three times in Jeremiah, and also here in First Timothy chapter six.

**Psalm 106** tells of God’s tremendous blessing upon the nation of Israel. Unfortunately verse thirteen says, “***They soon forgot his works; they waited not for his counsel: But lusted exceedingly in the wilderness, and tempted God in the desert.***” Once they forgot His works we read in verse twenty-one, “***They forgot God...***”

Finally God moved in judgment against His people. Verses forty through forty-two continues, “***Therefore was the wrath of the LORD kindled against his people, insomuch that he abhorred his own inheritance. And he gave them into the hand of the heathen; and they that hated them ruled over them. Their enemies also oppressed them, and they were brought into subjection under their hand.***”



## GOD’S PRINCIPLE OF SOWING AND REAPING

**Galatians 6:7** says, “***Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.***” Getting saved and joining the church at Ephesus did not change God’s principle. Christians or unsaved must reap what they have sown. They were to “count their own masters worthy of all honour.”

## GOD’S PRINCIPLE OF AUTHORITY

God is also very concerned about us understanding His principle of authority and His chain of command in every area of life. Christians were to treat their masters with respect even though their masters were unsaved. **First Peter 2:18** says, “***Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward.***”

Concerning this situation, **Ephesians 6:7-8** says the servant was to be “***With good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men: Knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free.***”

## GOD WAS NOT CONDONING SLAVERY

God was not condoning slavery any more than He was condoning wicked kings when He commanded Christians to be in subjection to their authority. **Romans 13:1** says, “***Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God.***” The lesson here has to do with how Christians should respond when mistreated.

In **Matthew 5:39-41** Jesus said, “***...whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloke also. And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain.***”

**Verse 2**, “***And they that have believing masters, let them not despise them, because they are brethren; but rather do them service, because they are faithful and beloved, partakers of the benefit. These things teach and exhort.***”

Paul referred to those that had “...believing masters.” It is one thing to take abuse from an unsaved authority; it is quite another thing to take abuse from a Christian authority, especially concerning the situation of slavery mentioned here.

Paul was not suggesting that a Christian owning slaves was right. The subject here is dealing with how a Christian must respond to abuse, even if that abuse is coming at the hands of a Christian. To the carnal Christian in Corinth who was being mistreated by another carnal Christian, Paul said, *"Now therefore there is utterly a fault among you, because ye go to law one with another. Why do ye not rather take wrong? why do ye not rather suffer yourselves to be defrauded?"* (First Corinthians 6:7).

The pastor at Ephesus was to teach Believers these truths. At that time slavery was everywhere practiced in the Roman empire. The Bible made it plain that Christians were to be in subjection; however, everywhere Christianity was taught and practiced, slavery eventually gave way to freedom.

**Verses 3-5.** *"If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness; He is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself."*

Paul has just taught that respect must be shown for all authority, and the Christians should respond with an even more ready service, if the authority was a Christian. It is evident that some would rebel and teach church members to ignore the pastor's teaching on this subject. Therefore, Paul added, *"If any man teach otherwise."* He said some Christians would *"...consent not"* to these, *"...wholesome words."* The word *"wholesome"* means *"to have sound health."* The church at Ephesus was anything but healthy at the time Paul wrote these instructions. A church congregation that refuses to submit to God-given authority, regardless if that authority is at home, on the job, in the government, or in the local church, will always be an unhealthy group.

## **PROUD CHRISTIANS HATE AUTHORITY**

In verse four Paul said those who *"teach otherwise"* are, *"...proud."* Proud Christians hate authority. The Greek verb here means *"to smoke, to fume; and be inflated with conceit."* The context of this entire section of Scripture is dealing with the local church members. The unsaved are certainly a proud lot; however, Paul is not talking about the outside world. He is talking about those *"who teach"* against what the God-given leadership is teaching in the local assembly. These proud Christians *"...consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness;"*

## **IMMEDIATELY WE ENDEAVOURED TO GO**

Paul refers to them as *"knowing nothing."* They argue about whatever the pastor is preaching or how he leads the local assembly, *"knowing nothing"* about what God has lead the pastor to do or to preach.

**God always gives directions to His leader!** In **Acts 16:9-10** we read, *"And a vision appeared to Paul in the night; There stood a man of Macedonia, and prayed him, saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help us. And after he had seen the vision, immediately we endeavoured to go into Macedonia, assuredly gathering that the Lord had called us for to preach the gospel unto them."* God gave the directions to His leader, and the people followed. Luke wrote the Book of Acts and had no problem getting under the authority of his God-given leadership. He said, *"...we endeavoured to go into Macedonia."*

The Greek word “*doting*” refers to these people who *have a sickly desire for useless debates*. While having no interest in Bible doctrine the troublemakers in the local church at Ephesus thrived on “*Questions and strifes of words.*” In Chapter **Acts 18:12** we read the Jews had “*...made insurrection with one accord against Paul, and brought him to the judgment seat.*”

In **verses 14-16** we read, “*Gallio said unto the Jews, If it were a matter of wrong or wicked lewdness, O ye Jews, reason would that I should bear with you: But if it be a question of words and names, and of your law, look ye to it; for I will be no judge of such matters. And he drave them from the judgment seat.*”

## **BRINGING IN THEIR OLD TRADITIONS**

When Jews got saved many of them brought their old traditions into the local church. In **First Timothy 1:6-7**, we read about some in the church who continued in “*vain jangling.*” When a person gets saved, it does not mean he automatically thinks like a Christian should think.

**Romans 12:2** commands us to be “*...transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.*”

Unsaved people who were involved in “*vain jangling,*” before they were saved, will continued to jangle after they are saved unless they get into the Word of God and allow the Word of God to change them.

**Ephesians 4:22-24** plainly commands Believers to “*...put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.*”

Christians who will not be renewed in their mind will not consent to “*wholesome words.*” Neither will they consent to, “*...the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness; He is proud, knowing nothing.*” He will continue in his “*...doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings*” (First Timothy 6:4).

“*Surmising*” has to do with forming an opinion about something for which one has no evidence. To be “*perverse*” is to turn aside to something that is contrary to evidence. It means to obstinately oppose the evidence in favour of an opinion. To “*dispute*” is to argue with irritating persistence. Paul referred to these troublemakers in the church as having “*corrupt minds.*”

In **Ephesians 4:22** Christians are commanded to “*...put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt...*” In **Second Timothy 3:8** we read of some church members who “*...resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate (refusing to accept the truth) concerning the faith.*” Paul said in their corrupt minds they suppose “*...that gain is godliness.*”

## **THERE IS MORE TO GAIN THAN MONEY**

When we think of gain we usually think of money and the things it can buy; however, it is unlikely Paul is referring to material things in this context of this chapter. In **Philippians 3:7** Paul said, “*But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ.*”

**Verse 6**, “*But godliness with contentment is great gain.*”

Godliness is mentioned in only fifteen verses in the entire Bible, nine of them are in First Timothy. The word “*contentment*” refers to a state of mind. It speaks of being free from murmuring and complaining.

In Third John 1:9-10 we read of “...Diotrephes, who loveth to have the preeminence...prating against us with malicious words: and not content therewith, neither doth he himself receive the brethren, and forbiddeth them that would, and casteth them out of the church.” The only thing we know about Diotrephes is he knew nothing about godliness or contentment.

**Verses 7-8**, “For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment let us be therewith content.”

Diotrephes has been dead for two thousand years, however, **his life was not totally worthless: God was able to use him as a bad example.** In the church at Ephesus, Timothy had some of the same examples of discontentment to deal with.

Paul said in **Second Timothy 2:17-18**, “And their word will eat as doth a canker: of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus; Who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some.”

God’s Word is very clear about how to handle these kinds of church members. We read in **Romans 16:17-18**, “Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them....by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple.”

God’s Church Manual says there are “...many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers...Whose mouths must be stopped....” (Titus 1:10-11).

**Verse 9,10**, “But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.”

## ONE OF THE MISQUOTED VERSES IN THE BIBLE

This is one of the most misquoted verses in the Bible. It does not say money is the root of all evil it says, “...the **love** of money is the root of all evil.” It does not say they that are rich it says, “...they that **will** be rich.” The context of these verses has to do with contentment.

## CONTENTMENT

Contentment does not mean we do not have desires. The dictionary says to be content is “...to have our desires appeased.” **Psalms 37:4** says, “Delight thyself also in the LORD; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart.” That does not mean if Diotrephes had delighted in the Lord, he could have had all his self-centered desires met. It means if he had delighted in the Lord, God would have given him the desire that would have glorified the Lord. The problem rests in the fact that Diotrephes was not godly, and therefore he was discontent because he could not have his own desires met.

**Psalm 51:17** says, “The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.” Matthew 5:3 says, “Blessed are the poor in spirit...” The word poor here means bankrupt. The church member who is bankrupt in spirit feels he has nothing to offer.

The Scriptures tell us that Diotrephes “...loveth to have the preeminence among them...” His life’s verse could well have been Job 7:11, “Therefore I will not refrain my mouth; I will speak in the anguish of my spirit; I will complain in the bitterness of my soul.”



Diotrephes was like the one mentioned in Psalm 78:8 who was “...*stubborn and rebellious...whose spirit was not steadfast with God.*” Discontentment is the ugly sister of “...*foolish and hurtful lusts...*”

**Verse 11**, “*But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness.*”

The pastor is warned to flee “*these things...that will bring many sorrows.*” He is rather to spend his time and energy cultivating “...*righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness.*”

**Verse 12**, “*Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses.*”

The pastor must be sure to have “*a good profession before many witnesses.*” Timothy and Diotrephes both had people watching them. **Hebrews 12:1** says, “*Wherefore seeing we **also** are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us.*”

**Verses 13,14**, “*I give thee charge in the sight of God, who quickeneth all things, and before Christ Jesus, who before Pontius Pilate **witnessed a good confession**; That thou keep this commandment without spot, unrebukeable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ.*”

Christ was not intimidated by Pilate. Christ boldly presented Himself as who He was, and Timothy is commanded to do the same. People like Diotrephes and their followers should never intimidate the pastor.

**Verse 15**, “*Which in his times he shall shew, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords.*”

In God’s own good time, all who oppose Christ or His pastors will know who is “*King of kings, and Lord of lords.*”

**Verse 16**, “*Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen.*”

Pilate’s body has lain in the grave for two thousand years. Christ lives on in “...*immortality.*”

**Verses 17-19**, “*Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.*”

## **NEW CONVERTS WITH A WEALTHY BACKGROUND**

Ephesus was a very wealthy city. Many of the converts in the local church would have been wealthy. They needed to learn that God is no respecter of persons. The rich must be “*charged*” to not look down on the poor or trust in their uncertain riches. Money or what it can buy does not have anything to do with salvation, and it can hinder spiritual growth after a person is saved. Those who were rich needed to be charged that they “...*be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate.*”

**Verse 20**, *“O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called.”*

The pastor has a tremendous responsibility committed to his trust. Those things committed to the trust of the pastor have been outlined in the previous chapters of First Timothy. Paul ends this epistle as he started it, warning the pastor to take care of those who are guilty of *“...profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called.”*

**Verse 21**, *“Which some professing have erred concerning the faith. Grace be with thee. Amen.”*

## **THE IMPORTANCE OF OUR PHILOSOPHY OF MINISTRY**

Some professed Christians in Ephesus were attracted by a false philosophy. Our philosophy of ministry is simple: we do what the Bible commands us to do, and we do it the way the Bible commands us to do it. A false philosophy of ministry has caused many to err concerning the faith in this day of apostasy that we live in today.



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